



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

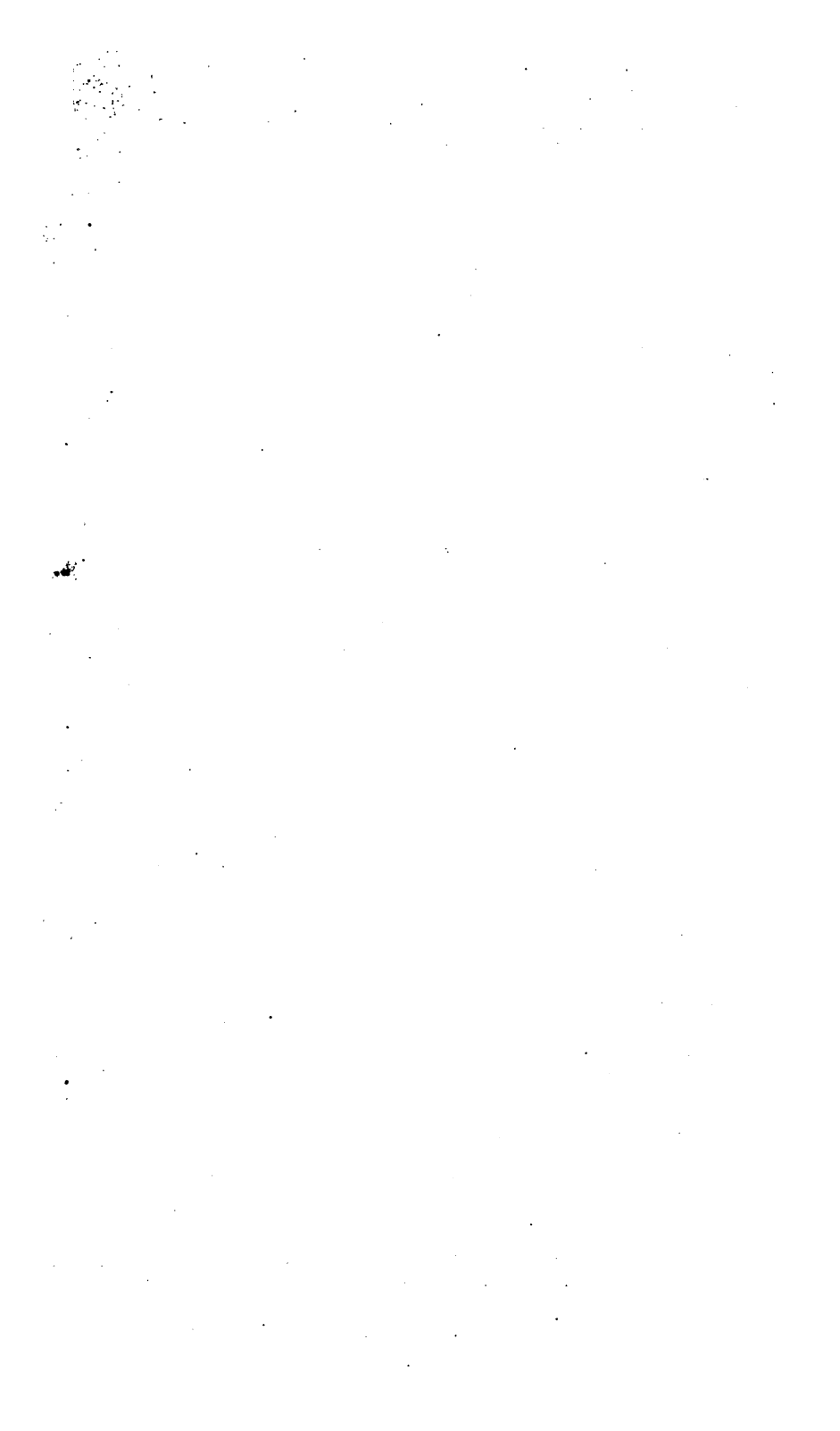


3 3433 06924074 9













1

1

Gilchrist

2



THE  
ETYMOLOGIC INTERPRETER;  
OR,  
AN EXPLANATORY AND PRONOUNCING  
DICTIONARY  
OF  
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

*An Introduction,*

CONTAINING

A FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRINCIPLES

OF

*ETYMOLOGY AND GRAMMAR, &c. &c. &c.*

---

BY JAMES GILCHRIST.

---



LONDON:

SOLD BY R. HUNTER, 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

---

1824.

---

G. SMALLFIELD, *Printer, Hackney.*

## PREFACE.

---

HAVING embraced so much variety of statement in the Introduction, and extended it greatly beyond his original intention, the author will not detain the reader long with prefatory observation. The present work is almost wholly different from every other work of the kind hitherto published; but the author is not conscious of having been actuated by any love of singularity; and he is fully aware that peculiarities, however original, may be the very reverse of excellencies. He may have missed his aim; but the sole object, the governing principle of his laborious undertaking, is utility. If there be, throughout his work, convincing internal evidence of the sincerity of this declaration, and that he has spared no labour to accomplish his purpose, he is surely entitled to enlightened, considerate, and candid criticism; and this is all the favour he solicits from Reviewers. The nature



of his undertaking peculiarly precludes perfection; and he has been obliged to content himself with much lower degrees of excellence than would satisfy him if he had any assurance of long life and much philologic improvement.

The plan of the Dictionary will be sufficiently understood by inspection, and therefore a description of it in this place is unnecessary. Wherever explanation seemed superfluous it has not been obtruded; as in the names of familiar objects, such as *horse, cow, house, &c.* Every person has a more distinct perception of the meaning of such words than can possibly be expressed; and therefore definition or explanation is futile. Partly with the view of rendering the Dictionary useful to foreigners, and partly for the purpose of enabling the English to compare their own words with those which correspond to them in other languages the nearest Latin, Italian, French, and German, synonymes are subjoined to the explanation. Thus, it was thought, foreigners might obtain some knowledge of the English language, and that English persons might obtain some knowledge of other languages.

## PREFACE.

When the English language, and others referred to, have the same word in common, it was not considered necessary to subjoin any learned or foreign synonymes.

For the sake of brevity many contractions are employed, such as *Ger.* for German, *It.* for Italian, *Fr.* for French, *Sp.* for Spanish, *Goth.* for Gothic: *cor.* for corruption, *con.* for contraction, &c. &c. It is not expected that such contractions will occasion any obscurity or perplexity. Partly to avoid expense, and partly to accommodate the mere English scholar, Greek words are put in large Roman capitals, as Latin words are put in small Roman capitals: thus, ONOMA, NOMEN, name. Occasionally the author has taken the liberty of prefixing the obsolete sign (or sign that a word is obsolete) ‡ to words of Saxon origin, though they may not be found in the English language: and in quoting Gothic, Saxon, Danish, Swedish, and Scottish words, (whose orthography is very various and uncertain,) he has sometimes trusted to his memory without being absolutely certain as to the most correct form of spelling.

As the Introduction has preparatory reference to the Dictionary, the former should be carefully perused before entering on the latter.

It is intended to publish the Dictionary in four parts: the first part will appear in the course of a few months.



# CONTENTS.

---

	Page.
INTRODUCTION .....	1
The Origin of the Alphabet considered .....	<i>ib.</i>
The Derivation of the English Language considered .....	5
The Anglo-Saxon and Gothic Origin of the English Language considered .....	10
ETYMOLOGIC PRELIMINARIES .....	23
The Interchanges of the Letters of the Alphabet considered .....	<i>ib.</i>
Verbal Contraction or Abbreviation considered .....	39
Verbal Corruptions considered .....	43
Verbal Ellipsis or Syntactic Abbreviation .....	47
The Mutations of Verbal Signification considered .....	54
The different kinds of Mutation in Verbal Signification ....	60
Verbal Diversities as to Rank or Respectability .....	62
Vocabular Redundancy and Deficiency .....	70
Logical Diversities of Verbal Signification .....	73
The Grammatic Distinctions of Words .....	90
The Doctrine of <i>Horne Tooke</i> examined .....	<i>ib.</i>
THE PARTS OF SPEECH CONSIDERED.....	102
Interjection .....	<i>ib.</i>
The Article .....	103
Conjunction .....	104
Preposition .....	105
Adverb .....	<i>ib.</i>
Adjective or Attributive .....	106
Of Pronouns .....	110
The Derivation of what are termed English Pronouns ....	113
The Words commonly called Pronouns considered in reference to Number, Gender, and Case .....	114
Number .....	<i>ib.</i>
Gender .....	115
Case .....	116

	Page.
The Noun or Substantive.....	125
Case, Gender, and Number, considered in reference to Nouns	132
Case .....	<i>ib.</i>
Gender .....	134
Number .....	138
The Verb .....	143
Moods.....	153
Tense.....	154
Auxiliary or Helping Verbs considered .....	157
Irregular Verbs .....	166
Prefixes and Affixes .....	175
Affixes .....	184
Affixes of Adjectives .....	<i>ib.</i>
Affixes of Nouns .....	188
Affixes of Verbs .....	198
GRAMMAR.....	200
Rational Grammar of the English Language .....	201
Arbitrary Grammar .....	204
The Grammar of Pronouns .....	<i>ib.</i>
The Double Forms of Pronouns .....	205
The Grammar of Verbs .....	210
Directions concerning the Substantive Verb .....	220
Directions concerning the Words called Auxiliaries or Help- ing Verbs .....	223
Directions concerning Regular Verbs . . . . .	225
Directions concerning the Irregular Verbs .....	231
Remarks on the Prepositions .....	232
Directions concerning Adjectives .....	235
Remarks on Composition.....	237
Orthography or Right Spelling .....	252
The Orthoëpy or Right Pronunciation of the English Lan- guage .....	258
Directions to the Natives of Scotland in pronouncing the English Language.....	270

---

## INTRODUCTION.

---

### THE ORIGIN OF THE ALPHABET CONSIDERED.

ON this obscure subject the reader is promised nothing but brevity ; for, after much toilsome inquiry and anxious reflection, the author has no satisfactory opinion to offer. The modern nations of Europe have adopted the alphabet of the Romans ; the Romans adopted the alphabet of the Greeks ; the alphabet of the Greeks is so similar in all respects to that of the Hebrews or Chaldeans, (for the former adopted the alphabet of the latter,) as to render it almost certain that the one was derived from the other, or that they had a common origin. Thus far all is tolerably clear and satisfactory ; but all beyond is dark and doubtful. Some persons have believed that Hebrew was the first language of man, and that the Hebrew alphabet came down from heaven. This is a short cut (as Horne Tooke terms it) which saves much trouble ; for on this hypothesis we have only to believe ;—it would be absurd, if not wicked, to inquire.

Admitting, however, that letters are of human invention, what is the nature of that invention ? Here we possess no certain data on which to reason ; for

we have no authentic history of this important invention. If the languages of Babylon and Egypt remained as entire as those of Greece and Rome, they would perhaps supply important documents in reference to the obscure subject of our inquiry; but they have long perished from the earth. Being wholly destitute of facts, we have nothing better than theories or conjectures on which to form an opinion.

The easiest and most obvious method of accounting for the origin of letters seems to be, that they were contrived like musical notes to indicate certain sounds of human utterance, which sounds had been previously employed as signs of thoughts and sensations. Upon this supposition, spoken language might exist long before the alphabet; just as music existed long before the gamut. The first is to be considered as having an existence wholly independent of the last, though the former might arrive at a degree of perfection, when assisted by the latter, which could not have been attained without it. When letters were thus invented as the signs of sounds, they might be employed also for the additional purpose of indicating, by similitude, sensible objects or their distinguishing properties.

This method of explaining the origin of letters long appeared to the author inadmissible; but more experience and reflection have rendered him less dissatisfied with it. Certainly much may be accomplished in process of time by human ingenuity, with

very scanty materials and very defective instruments. There is not less difference, probably, between language as we now find it and what it was in its infancy, than there is between the largest ship of war and the smallest canoe; or between the most splendid palace and the rudest hut. Every person who has carefully observed the multitude of words that are resolvable into a single verb, noun, or adjective, will cease to wonder that the whole of language should be resolvable into a few letters, even if these letters be considered merely as signs or marks of sounds emitted by the mouth of man to intimate his thoughts and feelings.

It would be easy to enlarge on this uncertain subject; and the time was when the author would not have dismissed it with a hasty notice; but there is nothing which he so much distrusts as his ingenuity. He propounded a peculiar theory some years ago, (viz. that the language of *signs* was prior to the language of *sounds*,) with more ardour than he could possibly display in his present state of mind, even if his opinion were the same. That opinion being before the public, a re-statement of it in this place (if the author were so inclined) is unnecessary. Perhaps after all, neither that opinion, nor the conjecture now offered, is wholly right. It is possible that the alphabet consisted from its formation of two distinct sets of signs; the one signs of sounds, the other signs of ideas. The vowels, with some of the consonants, were perhaps employed like musical notes,



or the marks in pronouncing dictionaries, merely to represent the sounds of the human voice: some of the consonants were perhaps invented to represent physical objects or their most remarkable properties.

But we will not detain the reader longer with useless conjectures. There is one other inquiry, however, of a doubtful character, which seems to deserve a slight notice before proceeding to subjects of more evidence and greater utility. If the modern languages of Europe and the ancient languages of Rome and Greece had a common origin with Hebrew, Which language is the oldest—and is that which is the oldest to be considered as the parent of the rest? There can hardly be any reasonable doubt that as Greek was prior to Latin, so Hebrew was prior to Greek; but it does not follow that the language of Greece was derived from the Hebrew. If they both contain many words which are manifestly identical, such kind of evidence is much stronger in favour of Chaldaic as the parent language; but even this has no internal evidence of being an original language. The opinion of the author is, that all the ancient languages extant, as well as the modern languages of Europe, had a common origin; but that the language from which they were derived has long ceased to exist.

---

## THE DERIVATION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONSIDERED.

ON this subject, to a certain extent at least, there can be but one opinion among competent judges. A great part of the English language is derived from Latin and Greek. Many words have been received directly from these languages; many have been received through the Italian, the Spanish, the Portuguese, German, Swedish, Danish, and Dutch; but the far greater proportion have come through the medium of the French.

The causes of the *direct* entrance of learned terms are, the general study of the learned languages; the facility with which such terms are applied to the various purposes of art, science and philosophy, &c.; (not to mention a very general disposition in learned men to show their learning); the application of Latin to law, physic, surgery, anatomy, botany, &c.; add to all which, the consideration that it was long almost the only written language of Europe:—to comprehend all in one sentence, Latin has for many hundred years been the learned language of Europe, and the terms of the *learned* are constantly descending into and becoming part of the *common* or *vernacular* language of every people on the face of the earth. It is on this obvious principle that we hope to prove, that if not all, nearly all that very part of

our language which is most confidently received as Saxon and Gothic, is, in fact, neither more nor less than a corruption of Greek and Latin.

The reason why many Greek and Latin words have been adopted by us, through the medium of the Italian, is sufficiently obvious. Rome, even when her consuls and emperors were no more, was still the seat of empire : an empire of mightier sway over the minds and habits and language of the nations, than ever was the power of the Cæsars. From other causes, too, Italy was the fountain of influence to all parts of Christendom ; for, besides the Catholic religion, with its Roman priesthood and Latin tongue, science, the productions of arts, and the arts themselves, were thence derived. It was Italy, too, that took the lead in vernacular literature : and her poets, novelists, historians, and philosophers, were as much in advance of those of other modern nations, as she was in advance of the rest of Europe in arts and manufactures.

It has been intimated, that the greatest influx of Greek and Latin words has been through the channel of the French. The causes of this are, evidently, the geographical proximity of France and her predominant influence in politics, polite literature, and fashion ; which influence has operated powerfully in Europe, and especially in Britain, ever since the reign of Charlemagne, and it still acts upon the English language very strongly ; for if French terms be not brought in by cart-loads, as was said in the

time of Chaucer, they are very abundantly spread over the speeches and writings of a numerous class in society, who have sufficient buoyancy to be always at the top of fashionable literature.

About the commencement of our vernacular literature, there was, indeed, an extraordinary importation of French terms; and the reason is obvious; for as the French borrowed all from the Italian, (which is admitted even by Voltaire,) we at that period borrowed nearly all from the French. But the grand cause of the fact in question, was the Conquest. It is well known that William of Normandy attempted to make French the only language of England; that it was the only language spoken at court, taught in schools, employed in statutes, legal forms and pleadings, &c. &c. The inference deducible from these facts is abundantly manifest: and that they are facts, the author is prepared to establish by a very ample collection of historical testimonies, which are withheld in this place merely because he deems them unnecessary, and because he is unwilling to swell his work by superfluous matter.

It has been intimated above, that some of the learned words, of which so much of our language consists, were received through the medium of the Spanish. The reason of this was the political pre-eminence and consequent predominant influence which Spain at one time possessed. Thus we have duplicates and triplicates of many words, which we borrowed by turns from the Italians, French, and Spaniards, as

they respectively happened to be in the political ascendant. But there was another cause of the influence of the Spanish: it formed a point of contact or link of connexion with the arts and sciences of the Saracens: hence, the portion of Arabic which is found in the different languages of Europe; for knowledge has the power not only of forcing a passage from more enlightened into less enlightened nations, but also of taking with it the very terms in which it happens to be contained. The fact is, words and thoughts are so mutually adapted, that translation is always difficult, and often impossible, so that it is less from choice than necessity that a people, poor in arts and sciences, borrow not only the improvements, but, to a certain extent, the language of their richer, i. e. more intellectual, more literary, and more philosophic neighbours: thus the nations of Europe, during the middle or dark ages, borrowed largely from the Saracens and the Greeks; thus the Celts, the Goths, the Sarmatians, and even the Persians, the Arabians, &c. &c., borrowed largely, for many ages, from the Greeks and Romans. These were the *Backwoods-men* of Grecian influence and the Roman empire: and if those stationary and unimprovable animals, the naked savages of Indiana, already speak a corrupt English, (or *Yankoe*,) it cannot surely be thought incredible that the venerable Gothic (whose origin, Mr. Horne Tooke says, is *buried in the deepest antiquity*) should prove, after all, with very little, if any exception, a corruption of

Greek and Latin. As to the Celtic, indeed, all the world knows that it is nearly as old as the creation ; and if not the very language which God put into the mouth of Adam, is, without controversy, that of Gomer, Japheth's eldest son.

It will be perceived, by inspecting the pages of the following Dictionary, that besides French, Italian, and Spanish, including Portuguese; Dutch, German, Danish, and Swedish, are to be considered mediums through which not a few Greek and Latin words have passed into the English language. Such words are generally much corrupted and disguised, as all *Southern* terms are in passing through the guttural medium of the Gothic organs of speech (the true Northern origin of the English language); but sufficient evidence remains of their passing from Greece and Italy to England, through Germany and Holland. The obvious causes of this effect are, geographical proximity, national affinity, political alliance, (against France, our natural enemy,) religious union, (i. e. Protestantism against Popery,) but, above all, mercantile intercourse; for Holland, the Netherlands, and the North of Germany, were long, for arts and manufactures and merchandise, what Italy had previously been to the rest of Europe.

The reader will perceive that these remarks have no direct reference to those words which English, Dutch, Danish, German, &c., considered as Anglo-Saxon or Gothic, have in common: that question is immediately to be considered. It is only necessary to remark

further here, that nothing more than a mere outline of statement was intended, free, if possible, from reasonable doubt or controversy: the proofs and illustrations of the statement are presented in the Dictionary; the peculiar plan of which was adopted for this as well as for other important purposes.

---

#### THE ANGLO-SAXON AND GOTHIC ORIGIN OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONSIDERED.

It is not without some reluctance that the author approaches this question; because he has both to encounter strong prejudice, and to controvert the opinions of Mr. Horne Tooke; for whose memory he entertains the sincerest respect, and for whose labours he feels truly grateful. He will not say that he would rather be in the wrong with Horne Tooke than in the right with Harris; but he considers the errors of the one far more interesting, and even instructive, than the truths of the other. Many had pretended to write *philosophically*; but it was reserved for the author of "The Diversions of Purley" to be the first, at least in this country, to write *sensibly* on the subject of language. If his celebrated work be big with promises, which never have been, and which, probably, never can be realized; they have internal evidence of proceeding from sincerity. But with every disposition to admit the merits of the

above work, it certainly does contain a considerable portion of unsound opinion, especially in connexion with the author's favourite theory of a Northern Origin; in support of which, ingenious paradox and bold assertion are more conspicuous than careful inquiry and dispassionate reflection: and the Gothic *derivations* are, for the most part, not only mere assumptions, but many of them are such as would have disgraced Junius or Skinner.

This, indeed, was perceived by the author of the present work, many years ago, when his admiration of the "Diversions of Purley" was at its height; for though, for a time, a convert to the theory of Mr. Horne Tooke, he had no faith in many of his etymologic instances; and he finds, in the copious extracts then made, the mark of interrogation or exclamation affixed to such words as the following:—*Odd*, i. e. *owed*, past part. of *owe*; *Head*, i. e. *heaved*, past part. of *heave*; *Bread*, i. e. *brayed*, past part. of *bray*; *Wench*, from *wincian* or *wink*; *Store*, from *stir*, &c. &c.

We had once intended to collect in this place all the unsound and absurd etymologies of Horne Tooke, and confront them with what we deem true derivations; but such a task would be invidious, and therefore the reader is referred to the Dictionary. It was the unfortunate theory of the Northern Origin that misled the acute judgment of the author of the *Diversions of Purley*; for his Greek and Latin derivations are as remarkably sound and incontro-



vertible as many of his Gothic derivations are absurd and false. He has certainly done much to rescue etymology from the contempt into which it had fallen in the hands of preceding etymologists, who were, in general, as destitute of a sound understanding and philosophic spirit, as of good taste and elegant scholarship; but he has deliberately and wilfully exposed both himself and his subject to much ridicule—a test of truth which he applied very freely to others: and if it has been employed sparingly against him, such forbearance must be considered as a kind of silent homage to his genius and talents. His Gothic partialities and prejudices, connected as they were with a particular theory and a *political* bias, are easily accounted for; but they are, nevertheless, unworthy of his understanding and inconsistent with the philosophic spirit of free inquiry. He perceived a remarkable similarity or rather identity in many Gothic and Anglo-Saxon words with Greek and Latin terms. What is the inference deducible from this fact? That the half civilized and illiterate tribes of the North borrowed such words from the highly civilized, and, therefore, powerfully influential Greeks and Romans, or, that they both derived them from a common origin? No, indeed, but that the Greeks and Romans, those masters and teachers of the world after the extinction of Babylon and Memphis, borrowed many words (perhaps terms of *art* and *science*) from the rude and unlettered tribes of ancient Germany! Or, as is ingeniously (not to

say fancifully) supposed, in bold defiance of all history and all probability, that these rude tribes made successful irruptions into Greece and Italy, and grafted their language on that which already existed in these countries! If one language were as quickly grafted on another as pippins are on crabs, (though the theory in question supposes the crab to have been grafted on the pippin,) Gothic irruptions (though Celtic irruptions would have a better claim) might have grafted a Gothic language on that of Greece and of Rome; but history supplies no evidence of such a process, which is effected not by *irruptions* but by permanent conquest and long possession; and even these have frequently failed of producing such an effect. Was the language of China thus formed by the incursions of Northern barbarians? (for the Chinese were conquered by the Tartars). Was the modern Greek formed by the irruption and even subjugation of the Turks? We will even put less obvious instances: was the present language of Italy and France and Spain thus produced? The idiom and grammatic construction and conjugations and declensions (and in these respects the *modern* is about as dissimilar to the ancient *classic* Greek) are, indeed, different from those of the ancient written, classic or *learned* Latin, (which differed more widely, in all probability, from the common or vulgar Latin than do the compositions of Johnson from the dialogues of our cockneys and villagers,) but the words, with few exceptions, are the same. The Italian, the

French and the Spanish are, notwithstanding Gothic irruption, and permanent conquest, and perpetual possession, nothing but a corrupt Latin. The truth is, a handful of invaders, (and *handful* they must be, however numerous, when considered in reference to a populous nation,) never did and never can produce much change on the language of a dense population; to which they are related as the Catholic missionaries to the Hindoos and Chinese; and instead of converting the people to their language, opinions, and customs, they conform to the established usage of the people. And if the ancient Saxons established their language in England and in the lowlands of Scotland, it proves that they were, if not the sole inhabitants, (the poor Celts having fled from their Gothic presence to the barren mountains,) at least a great and overpowering majority.

But the Herculean argument for the Northern Origin, is the *darkness* of its *deep antiquity*. We can trace (Mr. Horne Tooke avers) the origin of the Latin and the Greek; but that of the Gothic is involved in darkness and buried in the deepest antiquity. Well, and is not the origin of *Cossackic* and *Hottentotic*, and of all the languages of all the uncivilized and half-civilized tribes of the earth, sufficiently buried in darkness to entitle them to the same honour? Why should the Anglo-Saxon or Gothic monopolize all this merit? The Celtic has surely some claims; and, as to words without number, every one capable of using a dictionary may

soon satisfy himself not only of striking resemblance, but of absolute identity with both the Greek and the Latin. Have not the Welsh, for example, *Pont* and *Dant* ? which are plainly *Pons* and *Dens*, or, as in Italian, *Ponte* and *Dente*. And is it not undeniably certain that the Romans borrowed all such words from the Welsh; the more ancient people?—which word *people* as well as *populus*, is, without controversy, a corruption of the Welsh *Pobl* ; for the more cultivated and literary language is uniformly derived from one ruder and less literary. It is amusing enough to find other writers advocating the Celtic origin of the Greek and Latin languages, with as much zeal, if not with the same talent, as Horne Tooke advocated the Gothic origin. The common worshippers of Celtic and Gothic antiquity (few of whom are worthy of ranging under the banners of Pinkerton and Whittaker) deserve no notice ; but even the paradoxes of Horne Tooke merit refutation, and therefore we have devoted more attention to them than may seem necessary.

The fact is as well established as any historical fact whatever, that the Goths had not the use of letters before the fourth century ; that they borrowed their letters from the Greeks and Romans ; that their first attempts at literature were rude translations and imitations of works written in Greek and Latin.

The fair inference seems to be, that as the Gothic, or, say at once, Saxon literature, (and the writings of men in the present age who know not how to spell

their own name, are as worthy of such a dignified appellation,) originated in Greek and Latin, so did a great proportion of the words composing it. This always has been the fact; for a rude and illiterate people as naturally borrow words from their civilized and literate neighbours as they borrow their improvements and arts and sciences, or as the poor beg from the rich : and the inverse process supposed, is as absurd as the idea of the rich borrowing food and raiment from the poorest paupers that exist in their neighbourhood or live on their bounty.

The only question, indeed, with unprejudiced inquirers, is likely to be concerning not the reality but the amount of Saxon derivation from the learned languages. This may not be easily ascertained with perfect accuracy; but from the very nature of the operating causes or influencing circumstances it must have been very considerable: and in reply to all Horne Tooke's smart witticisms about the Goths not waiting for others to come and put words in their mouth, it is sufficient to remark, that they would naturally adopt in process of time new foreign terms for many of their old vernacular ideas, (for such is the process with all people similarly circumstanced,) and that with the multitude of ideas which literature introduced among them, they would adopt to a wide extent the terms in which they were conveyed to them, partly from choice and partly from necessity. This is the history of all the living languages of the earth, not merely of such as are most

rude, unformed, and imperfect, (and what can well partake more of these attributes than the scrap of Gothic contained in Codex Argenteus, or even the Saxon of the eighth and ninth centuries?) but of those which are most improved, and most firmly fixed by authoritative rules, established principles, and admitted standards. New terms and modes of speech are constantly displacing the old ; for,

---

usus

Quem penes arbitrium est jus et norma loquendi.

Custom, the sovereign arbiter of language, is as capricious as tyrannical ; and “time is the greatest of all innovators.” It is only by ceasing to exist as a *living* language, that the privilege is acquired of being deified with immutability, if the Fates decree as to the Greek and the Latin the lasting honour of immortality.

The only argument of Mr. Horne Tooke intrinsically deserving refutation, is that which he attempts to erect on the evidence of etymology ; and on this he evidently relies with much confidence. He puts the question—When two different languages have the same words, how are we to ascertain which of them borrowed from the other ? This is not a very satisfactory mode of putting the question, for two languages might have the same words without either borrowing from the other, as both might have derived them from a common origin. But his manner of replying to the question is still less satisfactory.

Etymology is to decide. So far good ; but what kind of etymology ? Here the advocate of the Northern Origin (to use his own words in reference to the supposed Divine Origin) takes a short cut which certainly saves much trouble, but leaves us in much ignorance ; for instead of proofs he contents himself with assumptions, as if the business were settled by merely *asserting* that a certain word is a Gothic verb or noun, without even attempting to give us any further information. *And*, for example, (he affirms,) is the imperative of *Annan*, give, and *Ad* or *Od*, a noun meaning *heap*, i. e. *give heap*, or put the heap : and this is the whole history and mystery of the conjunction *And* !!

As to the instances which he gives of Gothic and Saxon words, whence corresponding Latin and Greek words must have been derived, it is difficult to conceive any reason whatever, save that the former are found in Gothic and Saxon letters and spelling. It was at first intended to collect in this place such instances, as well as all such Gothic derivations as seem demonstrably false or absurd, but it was subsequently deemed best to refer the reader to the Dictionary, where they are examined in their alphabetic order. This, whilst it avoids swelling the present work unnecessarily, seems more respectful to the memory of Mr. Horne Tooke, than if we were to bring all his objectionable derivations into one view. We take leave of him, therefore, for the present, by merely adding, that with all our esteem for his

talents and many of his opinions, we cannot help thinking that he presumed not a little on the etymologic ignorance and credulity of his readers, and that he trusted more to intuitive sagacity, than to careful inspection or laborious inquiry.

There are but few Gothic admirers that can deserve the honour of being noticed in connexion with the author of the *Diversions of Purley*; but this seems the proper place for saying a few words about the *utility* of Saxon literature, especially as there appears some disposition to exalt it into undue importance. A Saxon Professor in one of our most renowned seats of learning has employed very laudatory strains on the subject; to one or two of which, it will quite suffice, to apply the test of criticism, if, indeed, it be fair thus to try the soundness of panegyrical orations. For what can be more natural, and, in the judgment of many, more laudable, than to endeavour to magnify the importance of our office and of our favourite studies, and pursuits, and theories?

“The Anglo-Saxon” (the learned Professor affirms) “is one of those ancient languages to which we may successfully refer in our inquiries how language has been constructed.” Well, this is a most comfortable assurance, a most gracious promise—big with hope, and pregnant with anticipation as the doctrine of Horne Tooke; but, if equally barren of results, is it not very unkind to tantalize our fond desires? It would be at least charitable to bestow upon us a few



crumbs of *successful inquiry how language has been constructed.*

The serious, sober truth is, that Anglo-Saxon is available for etymologic purposes in studying the English language, but not half so available as German, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, old English, Scottish, Greek, and Latin. The reason is obvious: such was the illiterateness of even the Saxon *literati*, that they knew not how to depict to the eye their own barbarous sounds. Hence the *caprices* of Saxon orthography, as they are leniently termed by the candid and enlightened author of the Anglo-Saxon History. To have a true idea of these *caprices*, (more properly rude essays at spelling,) we have only to compare them with the literary attempts of our most unlettered mechanics or labourers who can barely read and write. Their orthography and composition and that of the Saxons will be found remarkably similar. This may displease the lovers of *Saxon literature*, and all lovers are apt to be offended when freedoms are taken with the objects of their affections; but our apology must be, that we have no wish to offend, and the ruling principle of our sentimentality is, *Rien n'est beau que le vrai.*

“The present language of Englishmen,” (says the Saxon scholar above alluded to,) “is not that heterogeneous compound which some imagine, compiled from the jarring and corrupted elements of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian; but [but what? completely Anglo-Saxon in its whole deri-

vation, having none but pure Gothic words in its vocabulary !] *completely Anglo-Saxon in its whole idiom and construction.*"

We may well exclaim *fie* upon *but* ; for it brings forth a most irrelevant conclusion. A zealous Frenchman might exclaim,—The present language of Frenchmen is not that corruption of Latin which some imagine ; but completely French in its whole idiom and construction : and thus might Spanish and Italian professors reason for the idiomatic antiquity of their language.

Specimens of the present English have been selected for the purpose of showing what a great number of pure Saxon words they contain ; but we think it can be proved that most, if not all, of these very Saxon words are as really Greek and Latin, as those which are admitted to be adopted from these languages. The sole difference is, that the words given as Saxon were adopted at a much earlier and ruder period, and, therefore, are more changed, contracted, and disguised. This is an opinion not hastily adopted, (for it was reluctantly admitted, being forced upon the understanding of the author in opposition to his faith in the Northern Origin,) but slowly and cautiously formed, after much inquiry and long deliberation.

If this opinion can be established, if it can be satisfactorily shown that all, or nearly all, the words of the English language are merely Greek and Latin terms, in learning which, so much time is spent in

youth ; the result will surely be far more important than tracing them up to the darkness of Gothic antiquity, which is as void of pleasing association as of useful instruction. And if the utility of our labours should prove much smaller than is anticipated, we hope, at least, to present etymology in an attractive form to the admirers of Greece and Rome, and all the lovers of polite literature. A writer of some celebrity has expressed considerable uneasiness and alarm at the idea of being dragged by etymology into the woods of Germany. Such fears are perfectly groundless. In studying the etymology of your own language to discover its true meaning and full force, its beauties and graces, and, we may add, its noble descent and learned origin, you may have to make the tour of Germany, and to approach within view of the Black Forest ; but the most finished understandings, the most accomplished judgments, the most elegant tastes and refined sensibilities, will not be left forlorn in Gothic regions, a prey to savage rudeness ; for etymology will conduct them to the classic banks of the Tiber, and the philosophic groves of Academus, where the smooth periods of the eloquent Cicero, and the golden sentences of the divine Plato, communicate to the ravished ear profound reflections on the true philosophy of the mind, the immutable principles of taste, and the eternal laws of criticism.

---

## ETYMOLOGIC PRELIMINARIES.



### THE INTERCHANGES OF THE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET CONSIDERED.

HERE it must be premised that letters, syllables, and words, are so variously changed in process of time, and in passing from mouth to mouth, from people to people, and from writer to writer, as to render it impossible to lay down rules which will embrace all etymologic transmutations. It is only intended, therefore, to point out those which are of most common occurrence.

The letters of the alphabet admit of being etymologically arranged thus :—

A, E, I, O, U, W, Y,  
 B, P, M, F, V, Ph,  
 C, G, K, Qu, X, H, Ch, Gh,  
 D, T, K, Z, S, N, J,  
 L, R.

Each of these distributions may be etymologically considered as but *one* letter. The first, in the above distribution, are denominated *vowels*, (*VOCALIS* from *Vox*, voice or sound,) because they of themselves give a distinct sound : all the other letters are denominated *consonants*, because they can be sounded

only in connexion with vowels. The first consonants, in the above distribution, are denominated *labials*, (LABIALIS from LABIUM, lip,) because they are formed by a compression of the lips : the second are denominated *gutturals*, (GUTTURALIS from GUTTUR, throat,) because they are formed by a compression or action of the throat : the third are named *dentals*, (DENTALIS from DENS, tooth,) because they require the compression or action of the teeth : L and R are denominated *linguals*, (from LINGUA, the tongue,) because they require the action of the tongue upon the roof of the mouth : the only difference is, that in forming *r*, the tongue is not brought into such close contact with the palate, as in forming *l*, whilst it has a slight jarring or vibratory motion. It is somewhat remarkable, that these two are almost the only letters in the alphabet, in the formation of which the *tongue* has any share ; though it has had the honour of giving name to speech among most, if not all, nations.

As to the reason or justness of the above *designations*, the reader may satisfy himself with experiments upon (or *in*) his own mouth in the course of a few minutes ; and there is a *convenience* in them, which is all the value we attach to them.

The interchanges of the vowels are so frequent, and so familiar to every one who has given the smallest attention to the subject, that we shall not trouble the reader with a single instance, but proceed directly to their interchanges with the consonants.

And here it will be proper to notice, first, those letters which have a middle nature between vowels and consonants, and which are considered as sometimes the one and sometimes the other. U, V, W, are essentially the same letter; as are I, J, Y: hence their numerous interchanges; as in the following instances: VACILLO, which we have Waggle, contracted into Wag; VAE, Woe; VALEO, Well; VALL-UM, Wall; VARUS, Wry; VASTUS, Waste; VELLUS, VILLUS, Wool; VENTUS, Wind; VERMIS, Worm; VIN-UM, Wine; VIRT-US, Worth; VOLO, Will, &c. &c.

Thus F, as well as the other labials, frequently changes into W: as, Wear, i. e. FERO; Woman, i. e. FÆMINA; With, ‡ Mith, i. e. METH; Wave from Move; Wrack and Wreck from ‡ Brek, Break; Wend and Wind from Bend; Wench from Minx; War, i. e. Mars.

In the same manner are M, V, Ou, U, changed into Y: Yellow, i. e. MELLEUS; Yea, Yes, i. e. *Oui*, Fr; Yell; (as also Howl, Wail,) i. e. ULULO; You, i. e. *Vous*, Fr. pronounced *Voo*, &c. &c.

Thus, also, J. becomes Y: Yoke, i. e. JUG-UM; Young, (whence ‡ Youngth, now Youth,) i. e. JUVENCUS, &c.

There is a great affinity between the vowels and the labials, which are the easiest of all consonants, except, perhaps, J, G, and C soft, S and Z: these letters, therefore, and the labials, interchange more

frequently with the vowels than do the other consonants.

The interchanges of the labials among themselves are so obvious and so frequent in their occurrence, as to render instances wholly unnecessary. It will be sufficient, therefore, to notice their relation to the other consonants. B (which requires the strongest effort in utterance of all the labials) often interchanges with D and T: thus, DIS, BIS; BELLUM, DUELLUM; Word, *Wort*, (Ger.) i. e. VERR-UM; Beard, *Bart*, (Ger.) i. e. BARBA, &c. &c. M, besides its labial, has a nasal property; hence it frequently interchanges with N, which also has a nasal property, besides being a dental. Thus the Greek termination ON is UM in Latin; ME in Greek is NE in Latin; *Natte* in French is Mat in English; Besom and Bosom are *Besen* and *Busen* in German, &c.

V and F, which may be termed the aspirate or breathing labials, have an affinity to H, Th, and Wh, which are also aspirates; and, therefore, frequently interchange with them: thus, VALLIS, Valley, became *Thal*, (as it still is in German,) then Dale, Dell; Haste is from Fast, i. e. FESTINUS; Horse is a corruption of FERUS; Hunt, (whence ‡ Hund, Hound,) i. e. VENATUS; Haunt, i. e. VENTITO; *Hors*, Fr. i. e. FORIS, *Fuor*, It. and our *Forth*; *Hablar*, *Hacer*, *Hambre*, *Harina*, Sp. i. e. FABULOR, FACERE, FAMES, FARINA, &c. &c.

The letter *V* has, in not a few words, changed into soft *G*: *Age*, i. e. *ÆV-UM*; *Abréger*, Fr. *Abridge*, i. e. *ABBREVIÖ*; *Sergeant*, i. e. *Servant*, &c. &c.

The letter *H* has been classed with the gutturals; but, as it has several peculiarities, it may as well be disposed of in this place. It is in all respects a most capricious member of the alphabet; and the Italians, not without reason perhaps, have denied it all claim to the honour of a letter; and one of their proverbs is—*not worth an H*; and the only office assigned to it in their language, is the humble one of showing when *C* and *G* are to be pronounced hard before *e* and *i*: as *Chino*, *Cheto*, pronounced *Kino*, *Keto*. The following remarks shall suffice for *H*.

1. It is frequently dropped in words that once enjoyed the honour of its company: as *Able*, i. e. *HABILE*.

2. It is frequently inserted where it had originally no place: as † *Hal*, *Hall*, i. e. *AULA*, i. e. *AULE*; *Hang*, i. e. *ANGO*, i. e. *AGCHO*; *Harvest*, i. e. *ARISTA*; *Hearth*, i. e. *Earth*; *Hint*, i. e. *Intimate*; *Hackney*, i. e. *Achineä*, It.

It may be remarked, that the uneducated are usually guilty of much impropriety in the use of *H*, prefixing it to most words beginning with a vowel, whilst they frequently omit it in those cases which grammatical custom has rendered proper.

3. It is a corruption of *C*, *G*, and other gutturals: as *Horn*, i. e. *CORNU*; *Heart*, *Herz*, Ger. i. e.



CORS ; House, ‡ Hus, ‡ Hasa, i. e. CASA ; *Haupt*, Ger. ‡ Hafod, ‡ Heafð, Head, i. e. CAPUT.

4. It is put not only for F, V, as noticed above, but also for the other labials: as Hire, i. e. MEREIO ; Hand, i. e. MAN-US ; Hag, i. e. MAGA, SAGA. |

5. Many instances occur of its being put for dentals: Home, i. e. DOM-US, &c.

6. The H or aspirate of the Greek is frequently changed into S in the Latin: as HEX, SEX ; HEPTA, SEPTEM ; HEMI, SEMI ; HUPER or HYPER, SUPER, &c. &c. In all such instances we, as well as our modern neighbours, uniformly follow the Latins.

We frequently find *V*, as well as *S*, in Latin, for the Greek aspirate, or where the Æolians had B, concerning which there has been so much learned controversy: as VER, i. e. HEAR, or BER, *Æol.* F, V (the far-famed digamma of the Æolians). H (originally E long) and S are so frequently interchanged, and so frequently inserted where they had originally no existence, that we cannot, perhaps, ascertain their order and succession: certain it is, that many words in the Latin have these letters, which are not to be found in the Greek forms of the same words: whether the Greeks pronounced such words as if they had such letters, it is useless to inquire. Thus, also, many words with us have these letters which did not originally exist: as, Harvest, i. e. ARISTA, &c.

## THE GUTTURALS.

These are plainly resolvable into one letter, or at the most, two letters. H, which we have classed with them, because it seemed to belong more to the *guttural* than to any other distribution, is merely an aspirate or sign of a strong expulsion of breath from the lungs with open mouth : X, like Ch and Gh, is a compound letter, being Cs ; Qu (for Q is never found without U) is merely Cu ; C and K are the same letter, the last being the Greek, and the first the Latin form. There remain to be considered, therefore, only G and C. These two letters are nearly identical ; indeed they were put indifferently, or *ad libitum*, in many Latin words ; and the G was not admitted into the Latin alphabet till after the first Punic war.

Nothing can well be more different from another than are the two powers of these letters, i. e. G and C hard and G and C soft : the one is truly hard (i. e. difficult and harsh) to both mouth (or rather throat) and ear ; the other is altogether as soft and easy, being the same as J, S, Tsh.

Here it will be proper to notice this double character of the gutturals. Mr. Horne Tooke affirms, that, with the Goths and Saxons as well as Latins and Greeks, these letters G and C were always hard ; but this appears to be one of his confident assumptions and bold assertions, well supported, it is true,

in this case, by the authority of others. He is evidently wrong with regard to the Goths and Saxons, as is admitted and shown by the Saxon Professor of Oxford; and that he is equally wrong with regard to the Latins, is more than probable; else, how was it that C and T should be indifferently employed in so many words, as Accius, Attius; Planities, Planicies? How should the two powers or sounds (or whatever they ought to be called) of G and C have taken possession of all the modern languages, even in words that are manifestly Greek and Latin?

The double character of these letters is to be regretted for several reasons, and for none more than for the etymologic disguise which it has thrown around many words whose origin would have been obvious; but the fact seems to be, that even from very early and ancient times the evil complained of existed, and that it originated in the difficulty and harshness of the *hard* or guttural pronunciation of the letters in question; and there appears a physical reason why it should have become a general rule, that before *e*, *i*, and *y*, G and C are soft; because there is a peculiar difficulty or labour (for men naturally consult their ease) in making them hard before these vowels, especially as the vowels were anciently pronounced; for the mouth is much more freely opened in pronouncing *a*, *o*, and *u*, than in pronouncing *e*, *i*, and *y*.

It is owing to the guttural difficulty and harshness (especially to the Latins, Italians, and French, through

whom we have received so many words) of G and C, that they change after the following manner :

1. N is assumed for the purpose of producing a nasal facility and smoothness of pronunciation ; thus, PAGO became PANGO ; JUGO, JUNGO, &c. : hence the frequent union of N and G, and N and C, not only in the Latin, but in all the modern languages of Europe, especially the Italian and the French, in which last language N and M have, without the assistance of G, very frequently the ringing nasal sound ; which sound predominates so much, (probably because the good people of France find it delightfully easy,) that said language might with more propriety be called after the nose than after the tongue.

It was remarked above, that there is a mutual affinity between M and N, because they have both a nasal character ; as the gutturals and the N have, when united, a highly nasal power ; hence, they also have a kind of mutual attraction ; for as N is frequently taken into union with G, so G and C, or K, are frequently taken into union with N : as, GNOPHOS, KNEPHAS (Greek) for NEPHOS, (NE PHOS,) GNOO, GNOMA for NOEO, NOEMA ; GNATUS for NATUS ; GNAVUS for NAVUS ; *Montagna* (It.) for MONTANA, &c. Song, (whence Sing,) i. e. SONUS ; Tink, Ting, i. e. TINNIO ; Strong, i. e. STRENU-US ; and many of our terminations in *ng* : thus, *ing*, the present participial termination was formerly end, ende, ent, and, ant, ande,

&c.; for such are the *caprices* of the Saxon orthography, that twenty different spellings might be discovered.

It may just be remarked, before leaving this topic, that the double guttural has, in Greek, the ringing nasal sound : Hang, ANGO, is, in Greek, AGCHO ; EVANGELIUM is EUAGGELION, &c. &c.

2. Owing to the guttural difficulty and harshness above noticed, C, K, G, are frequently changed, not only into J and S, both in power and in spelling, but also into X, Ch, Gh, W, H, &c.: FIXUS from FIGO ; NEXO from NECTO ; VEHO, i. e. OCHEO ; Walk, i. e. CALCO ; Short, i. e. Curt, i. e. CURT-US ; Chain, i. e. CATENA ; Chalice, i. e. CALIX ; Church, i. e. † Kurk, † Kirk, i. e. KURIKOS ; Fellow, i. e. Colleague, i. e. Collega ; Night, i. e. NOCTE, (ablative of Nox,) *Notte* (It.) ; Right, i. e. RECT-US, &c. &c. The present *gh* of the English language is silent, and only serves to make the preceding vowel long, except in a few instances where it sounds like *ff* ; but it was at first, as it still is with the Scotch, Germans, &c., a particular Northern guttural, approaching to a strong aspirate or the H forcibly pronounced.

#### THE DENTALS.

These of course frequently interchange, and the same general rule of transmutation holds ; viz. the more harsh and difficult letters (and combinations of letters) usually change into those which are more

smooth and easy. Facility, however, being often the result of early and long habit, a pronunciation may be easy to one people which is very difficult to another. Thus the Saxon sound of *gh*, *ch*, so easy to the Scotch and Germans, &c., is almost impossible to the modern English (just as some French sounds are); and *th*, so easy to the English, is almost *unpronounceable* to the other nations of Europe. But though so difficult to them, there are almost innumerable instances of its being substituted among us for letters that seem both smoother and easier; as,

‡ Thack, Thatch, i. e. TECT-UM; Thin, i. e. TENU-IS; Thrust, i. e. TRUSIT-O; Thunder, i. e. TONITRU; Thou, Thee, i. e. TU, TE; Faith, i. e. FID-ES; Mother, i. e. MATER; Father, i. e. PATER; Brother, i. e. FRATER, &c. &c.

The general tendency of transmutation among the dentals is of D into T, and of T and Th into S, Sh, Z: hence, *ed*, the p. p. of verbs, is frequently changed into *t*; as, *learnt* for *learned*, &c.; and *eth*, the verbal termination, is now generally *s*; as *loves* for *loveth*, &c.

*Di* having before another vowel nearly, if not wholly, the very power of J, it is interchanged with it; as,

Journey, (also *Char*.) i. e. DIURNUS; Journal, i. e. DIURNAL.

S, Sh, Ti, (when pronounced shi,) can hardly be considered dentals, being merely an emission of

breath with the mouth compressed: being of very easy formation they are of frequent occurrence, notwithstanding their unpleasant *hiss*, like that of a goose and a serpent so much objected to. *S* is frequently inserted merely for the purpose of softening harsh or difficult letters; as, *Scoûr*, (to run,) i. e. *CURRO*; *Scourge*, *Scorreggia*, (It.) i. e. *CORRIGIA*; *Slabber*, i. e. *LABARI*; *Slip*, i. e. *LAPS-US*; *Slack*, i. e. *LAX-US*; *Slime*, i. e. *LIMUS*; *Square*, i. e. *QUADRA*; *Slight*, i. e. *Light*; *Skill*, i. e. *CALLEO*; *Scald*, *Scalido*, (It.) i. e. *CALIDUS*, &c.

*S* is frequently a contraction of *Ex*: *Span*, *Spanna*, (It.) i. e. *EXPANSA* (stretched out); *Spawn*, i. e. *EXPONO* (to throw out); *Speed*, *Spedio*, (It.) i. e. *EXPEDIO*; *Spend*, i. e. *Expend*, &c. &c. This contraction of *Ex* occurs much in all the modern languages, but especially in Italian.

There is such an affinity, or mutual attraction, between *d*, *t*, and *n*, that the one frequently takes the other into union with it. Thus, *Maund* (*Mande*, Fr.) i. e. *MAN-US*, also corrupted into *Hand*; *Wander*, *Andare* (It.), *Andar* (Sp.), i. e. *VADERE*; *Render*, i. e. *REDDERE*, &c. &c.

#### THE LINGUALS.

These letters, i. e. *L* and *R*, interchange so frequently, that there is hardly a single word containing either of them which does not supply an instance

when traced through the different languages of Greece, Italy, France, England, &c. We proceed at once, therefore, to other considerations.

1. Owing to the vibratory motion of the tongue in pronouncing *l* and *r*, they are frequently (particularly the latter) tumbled out of their proper place, and (except when language is remarkably *fixed* by established principles and authoritative rules) they do not remain long in any one position, but shift about to every possible point of the same word; occupying, by turns, the beginning, the middle, and the termination. The fact in question is so obvious, and has been so frequently noticed by preceding writers, that we shall not stop to collect instances.

2. There are properly two kinds, i. e. pronunciations, of both *L* and *R* ; the one exceedingly harsh and difficult, the other very smooth and easy. When preceded and followed by vowels, they are so easy to the mouth, and so musical to the ear, as to deserve all the *liquid* encomiums of both the old and new grammarians ; but when beginning a word, or when wedged in between hard consonants, or even when strongly uttered, (though not thus situated,) in the manner of the Irish and French, &c., nothing can be more harsh and difficult, and even *unpronounceable*, to some organs of speech. So that the doctrine of the *liquid powers* of *L* and *R* is, in one view, very true, in another, very false. There are individuals, and indeed, people of a whole district, that can never



master and manage the *hard* L. The peasants of Somersetshire, usually corrupt it into W: ludicrous instances of which are familiar to most persons—such as the following. A Somersetshire man *exhorting* his *brethren*, (in London as we have heard,) told them to go home and examine their *wives*, i. e. *lives*: and in reference to the Saviour, he thanked God for the *wife* that he *wed* and the doctrine which he taught so *queerly*, i. e. for the *life* which he *led* and the doctrine which he taught so *clearly*.

The old Saxons seem to have been put to their shifts in pronouncing L; hence, in the Saxon literature it is frequently preceded by *H*; as *Hlaf*, i. e. Loaf, &c.

It was evidently to distinguish between the soft and hard, or weak and strong L and R, that these letters were, at first, sometimes put singly, and sometimes doubly; for as we have *rr* and *ll* at the end of many words, so the Spaniards and the Welsh, &c., have *Ll* at the beginning of words, some of which, indeed, are corruptions of *Cl*, *Pl*, *Fl*: as *Llama*, (Sp.) for *FLAMMA*, Flame, &c.

The facts contained in the following particulars naturally arise out of the double character of the linguals.

3. Owing to the difficulty of pronouncing R and L hard, (particularly the last,) they have been, in many instances, suppressed: as *Moan*, i. e. Mourn, (MCEREO,) *Haut*, *Haute*, Fr. i. e. ALT-US, whence High, Height, Haughty, &c.; Sauce, i. e. *Salsa*, It.;

Save, i. e. SALVO. Where the L is yet retained in the spelling, it is often silent in pronunciation : as, Calm, Walk, Would, &c.

4. As the smooth pronunciation of L and R, (particularly the last,) is but a slight jar of the tongue in emitting sound from the mouth ; they (particularly R) are often unintentionally presented to the ear, especially by indistinct speakers, as all illiterate persons are, such as those with whom language originated, or rather through whom it descended : and hence, the linguals are found in many words in which they did not originally exist. Thus, CARMEN, i. e. CAMENA ; † Armoniack, i. e. Ammoniac ; Bridegroom, i. e. *Bruidegom*, (Dutch,) *Brantigam*, (Ger.) compounded of Bride and GAMEO to marry ; Brick, i. e. *Backstein*, Ger. &c. &c.

If the following words were spelled as they are vulgarly pronounced, (which would be the case if our orthography were not fixed,) they would be *Idear*, *Lawr*, *Windowr*, *Drawr*, for Draw, &c. &c. The fact is, it requires a very correct habit of utterance to avoid the insertion of R in these and similar cases, and especially in connexion with the broad A ; because the percussion of air from the lungs acting on the rough surface of the larynx, naturally tends to produce the jarring sound of R, even if the tongue could be kept perfectly quiet ; which, however, without an effort of resistance is thrown into a vibratory motion at the same time. Hence, persons who use the larynx much in speaking have what

is called the *burr in the throat*, like the people of Newcastle.

5. *L* frequently interchanges with *N*: hence *Maninconia*, It. for MELANCHOLIA; Bale, Baleful, Bane, Baneful. The physical reason of this interchange is, that the action of the mouth in forming *l* and *n* is nearly the same. *N* is sometimes changed into *L*, but the general process of transmutation is of *L* into *N*.

6. In Italian *L* is generally changed into *I*, when immediately preceded by B, F, P: as, *Biasimo*, i. e. BLASPHEMO; *Fiamma*, i. e. FLAMMA; *Pianta*, i. e. PLANTA; *Piano*, i. e. PLANO.

All the above remarks were framed with an immediate view to our own language, but being founded on physical principles they apply equally to all languages. They do not include every possible change among the letters of the alphabet, but they will serve as a general indication of alphabetic transmutations.

---

VERBAL CONTRACTION OR ABBREVIATION CON-  
SIDERED.

HERE three general rules may be laid down.

1. The more illiterate any people are, the more do they contract their words; and the illiterate part of a community always shorten their words more than the educated portion of society. Thus the language of the Franks abounds with more violent contractions of Latin than does that of the Italians, the modern masters and teachers of Europe: the language of the Saxons is characterized by more verbal contraction than the old English in the time of Chaucer, and the English of his period has more of the same character than when our language first began to be fixed by established rules and uniform polite usage: and thus, also, the language of the vulgar is remarkable for violent contractions: as, *Gemman*, for Gentleman; *A'nt*, for are not; *fudge*, for fiction; *fib*, for fable; *bum*, for bottom: to which may be added such words as the following, though yet tolerated in familiar or jocular discourse; *ca'nt*, *sha'nt*, *wont*, for cannot, shall not, will not; *rant*, for rodomontade; *rum*, for romantic; *chum*, for comrade, &c. &c. Had these and all such words descended to us from the venerable antiquity of *Saxon literature*, they would, in all probability, have possessed, if not dignity, at least, respectabi-

lity ; but being vulgar upstarts of recent times, they can never rise to the classic title of good expressions, or to the honour of polite usage.

2. Longer words and syllables contract (whilst language is unfixed) into shorter, and the longer the word, the greater the contraction. Thus polysyllables become monosyllables, and monosyllables frequently shorten into a single letter : as AUDITUS contr. into *Udito*, It. ; *Oui*, Fr. ; EGO, contr. into ‡ Eck, ‡ Ick, ‡ Ich, ‡ Ic, then *I*, *Je*, Fr. ; *Io*, It. ; *Yo*, Sp. ; HABEO, contr. into *Ho*, It. ; *He*, Sp. ; *Ai*, Fr., &c. &c.

Such is the process of every living language on the face of the earth until checked by grammatic authority, which is late in coming into existence, and not till long after the lawless anarchy of custom (the sovereign arbiter of language according to Horace) has committed strange etymologic outrages in mutilating and disfiguring the monuments of classic antiquity. These disfigurations are the true Gothic Origin of the modern languages : and even the Italians, those modern Latins, consider themselves indebted for their language to the Lombards.

The contractions in question are made in every possible manner ; sometimes the beginning and sometimes the termination of words is cut off, and sometimes the middle is thrust out and the two extremes compressed into the closest possible contact ; especially by the French, who, next to the Anglo-Saxons, have been guilty of the greatest etymologic

havock. The following ancient and modern names of places are presented as instances of the process of verbal contraction above indicated. The oldest form is put first.

Acarnania, now Carnia ; Aciris, Acri ; Adranum, Aderno ; Ænona, Nona ; Ænus, In ; Agrigentum, Gergenti ; Aletium, Lecci ; Alexandria, Scanderia ; Alexandrium, Scandalia ; Aluta, Alth ; Ambiani, Amiens ; Amisia, Emse ; Amisus, Amid ; Amphipolis, Emboli ; Antipolis, Antibe ; Aquæ Sextiæ, Aix ; Arelatum, Arles ; Arsenariaria, Arzen ; Ateste, Este ; Agusta, Aosta ; Augustodunum, Autun ; Auximum, Osimo ; Barathra, Brata ; Borbetomagus, Worms ; Cabilonum, Challon ; Cæsar Augusta, Saragosa ; Ligeris, Loire ; Mæandrus, Madre ; Matrona, Marne ; Metaurus, Marro ; Magantiacum, Mentz ; Rhodanus, Rhone ; Thessalonica, Salonichi ; Garienus, Yar ; Eboracum, York ; Castellum, Cassel ; Conimbrica, Coimbra ; Damascus, Damas ; Forum Julii, Friuli ; Lugdunum, Lyons ; Novesium, Neus ; Noviodunum, Noyon ; Telo Martius, Toulon ; Tridentum, Trent, &c. &c.

These instances besides answering the immediate purpose, serve also to exemplify nearly all the remarks concerning the alphabetic interchanges and transmutations. It may be observed, that many names of places whose orthography has been fixed, are much abbreviated in common speech : as Cirencester pronounced *Sister*, &c. From this as well as from all the foregoing examples, it plainly ap-

pears not only that long words are contracted into shorter forms, but that the longer the name the greater the contraction; as in all cases the more difficult and unmanageable a word is, the greater is its corruption in process of time. The following instances are taken almost at random.

ELEEMOSYNA, *Alms*; EPISCOPOS, *Bishop*; (*Abispo*, Sp.; *Vescovo*, It.; *Evêque*, Fr.; such are the caprices of etymology!) *Presbyter*, *Priest*; OBLITERO, ‡ *Bluther*, *Blur*, *Blot*; Collect, Cull; Coil (*Cueillir*, Fr., &c.); Bull, (as Irish Bull,) Blunder, contr. of *Balena a terra*, It., BALÆNA AD TERRAM, a long-established expression; Seacalf, Seal; DESPICATUS, *Despise*, *Spite*; Succumb, Sink; *Secure*, *Sure*; SEMINO, *Sow*; Sluice from SECLUSUS; Count, contr. of COMPUTO; Come, COMMEO; Chair, CATHEDRA; Round, ROTUNDUS; Sedate, Sad, &c.

Such instances might be multiplied indefinitely; but the reader is referred to the Dictionary, where the *modes* and *stages* of transmutation and contraction are more fully presented to view. We merely subjoin a few examples of proper names.

Benjamin, *Ben*; Robert, *Rob*, *Bob*; Joseph, *Joe*; Timothy, *Tim*; Richard, *Rick*, *Dick*; Edward, *Ned*; William, *Will*, *Bill*; Henry, *Harry*, *Hal*; Alexander, *Ellick*; Thomas, *Tom*; Margaret, *Meg*, *Peg*; Elizabeth, ELIZA, *Bet*, *Bess*, *Betty*, &c.; Sarah, *Sally*; Maria, Mary, *Molly*, *Moll*, *Poll*, &c. &c. Some of these contracted forms belong to the lower orders of the vocabulary, like all those called

*flash* or *cant* terms ; but others have all the dignity of polite usage. What has thus happened to *proper* names, also happened in days of yore to *common* nouns and to all words ; as is still their fate in the language of the vulgar, and in the *Saxon-like* literature of the uneducated members of society.

---

#### VERBAL CORRUPTIONS CONSIDERED.

THESE have been already (though not professedly) adverted to, and are, in many respects, identical with *verbal contraction* ; but there are many changes of words from their original form which could not be included under that denomination ; and, therefore, a few separate remarks may be applied to them here.

1. Words that are new, strange, and unusual, (as all foreign terms are when first imported or adopted both to the ear and the mouth,) are most liable to be corrupted or changed from their original form. There is an idiom in the sounds and in the pronunciation of every people, as well as in their phraseology, and they naturally bring the sounds and pronunciation and words of other languages (when introduced among them) to their own idiom or manner. The French (as the Greeks did before them) do so professedly and systematically ; and all people, however unintentionally, do so to a considerable extent. Hence, the reason why words



adopted from other languages are often so much disguised, like foreigners in the costume of the country, that their original features can hardly be recognized. Who would suppose, for instance, that our *yes, yea, ay*, are the French *oui* ? There is not a single letter the same. The same thing would happen to words of recent importation, if we did not, by a sort of fashionable pedantry and servility in borrowing almost peculiar to us, put the new patches of French orthography as well as French pronunciation upon the old garment of our language, which was sufficiently motley before ; for no confusion of tongues or mixture of all the dialects of Babylon could well equal it in anomalies. If we were to spell that truly fashionable word *ennui* as it is pronounced, it would be *ongwee* ; but who would suppose, judging by the eye, that the one was metamorphosed into the other ? It is sufficient to have indicated the fact : almost every page of the Dictionary supplies examples and illustrations.

2. Words that are long and hard or difficult are always liable (before language is fixed by grammars and dictionaries) to be much corrupted, or changed from their first form. This has been already indicated.

3. Words much in use or which frequently pass from mouth to mouth in the hurry of common discourse, are exceedingly liable to be corrupted. Hence, all familiar *household words*, (and that part of our language which has descended from Saxon

times consists chiefly of such,) are usually much more metamorphosed in process of time than the learned or literary and scientific terms of a people: hence, also, the etymologic difficulty attending the particles of every language.

4. The terminations are the parts of words which are most liable to be corrupted, as is evident from a careful inspection of any given number of terms. The physical reason of this seems to be, that all men, being naturally idle and careless, are usually impatient to get to the end of any thing they have to do or say; and therefore hurry the one out of their hands and the other out of their mouth badly finished. The above fact, as well as that immediately preceding it, has been treated of by Horne Tooke with all the acuteness and dexterity which he applied so successfully to his subject, when his understanding was not biassed by theory.

5. There are many verbal corruptions which originated not in carelessness, hurry, or mere mispronunciation, but in deception occasioned by similitude of sound, in new, strange, or foreign words, to that of some others well known: thus, *Chartreuse*, was corrupted into *Charter-House*; *Asparagus*, corrupted into *Sparrowgrass*; *Reticule*, *Ridicule*; *Lustrino*, It. a shining silk, cor. into *Lutestring*; *Benzoin*, *Benjamin*; *LANTERNA*, cor. into *Lanthorn*, as there happened to be *horn* in the old *lantern*, &c. &c. Thus did sheer ignorance produce many strange corruptions, as well as an etymology contemptibly

absurd; for even that of Horne Tooke is often of this description when connected with the Northern Origin.

6. It is with the ignorant and the uneducated that the grossest verbal corruptions chiefly originate and abound; hence they have, for the most part, a radical meanness and vulgarity about them, (unless they have descended from Saxon literature and possess the dignity of Gothic antiquity,) for they never possessed sufficient merit to rise to any office of distinction or station of respectability. Not to adduce such striking instances of gross corruptions (for the examples above, as well as those given under Verbal Contraction, are sufficient) as *Bamboozle*, *Bother*, *Balderdash*, *Rip* or *Rep*, (i. e. *Reprobate*,) *Demi-rip*, &c. &c.: even such instances as *Hint*, i. e. *Intimate*, *Get*, *Git*, *Gist*, (i. e. *Gesta*, i. e. *RES GESTA*,) &c. are rather *low* words: and hence the difficulty of supporting the familiar or middle *style* with sufficient dignity, or even decent respectability: a task to which neither the genius of Swift nor the taste of Addison was fully equal.

---

## VERBAL ELLIPSIS OR SYNTACTIC ABBREVIATION.

THAT which is here indicated has the same relation to composition, i. e. to sentences and members of sentences, as verbal contraction has to single and separate words: the one is the leaving out of letters and syllables; the other is the omitting of whole words. Both are to be accounted for in the same manner; both originate in *carelessness*, or *hurry*, or the love of ease, natural to all men; who usually take the shortest cut to the object of their thoughts and affections, and employ elliptic modes of expression, for the same reason that they adopt *shorthand* and other contractions or abridgments of labor. This is ever their short, direct course, when engaged in good earnest about their wishes and wants, their business and necessities. From various causes, *manner*, or *style*, will differ among individuals and among nations: that of one may be exceedingly full and redundant in expression; that of another may be as remarkable for shortness and abbreviation: some from mental taste and habit are lavish of words, as Cicero; others are sparing of them, as Sallust. There are overpowering temptations to verbal redundancy and prolixity; as when attorneys and reviewers and writers for publishers are paid so much per line or so much per sheet; and there are temptations to the opposite extreme, as when the

writer has to pay for an advertisement; for his *words* are likely to be *few*, even if not *well ordered*. But all such considerations produce no sensible effect on the language of a people, which is always tending to abbreviation in all its modes of expression; for there is this difference between the contraction of *words* and that of *expressions*: the former may be checked in process of time, the latter never can be checked; and though there be inconveniencies as well as advantages attending this elliptic process, it is amenable to no grammatic law, and, therefore, is always in full operation.

That which is now under consideration was too obvious to escape observation, and, therefore, it has been frequently noticed by philological and metaphysical writers, as, for instance, by the ingenious Tucker: it was familiar, indeed, to mere grammarians; but Mr. Horne Tooke has treated of *ellipsis* in such a clear, full, and satisfactory manner, that it is unnecessary to enlarge on the question in this place, and, therefore, a few illustrations will suffice.

It is difficult (if, indeed, possible) to select a single sentence or expression which is not elliptic. Take such instances as the following, which happen to occur at the moment: A prince of the blood, i. e. blood royal, or royal blood; a man of colour, i. e. dark colour; a man of rank, of family, of fortune, &c., i. e. of high rank, of good family, of great fortune, &c. Nor is the *ellipsis* filled up by thus supplying such omitted terms, for there is hardly a

single word, (if, indeed, any word,) in any single expression, which had not, at one time or other, more words connected with it; which were dropped, because the meaning of the expression having been once well established and effectually associated with some of the leading terms, the others could be omitted, and yet the signification retained. For example, in the expression, Man of quality—Man is a contraction of *human*, which requires *being* (or some equivalent word, if the ellipsis be filled up) to be connected with it: then *Quality* (a contraction of *equality*, as QUALIS is of ÆQUALIS) manifestly requires to be connected with other words; for without their assistance, it could not express the meaning which is now suggested or indicated by it. There is, in reality, *ellipsis* (i. e. something left out) not only in every expression, but in almost every important word; such as FORMA, (meaning beauty,) i. e. FORMA VENUSTA; Libel, i. e. LIBELLUS FAMOSUS, &c. &c. And to each of such words, the *synecdoche* of the grammarians (that is, a *part* put for the *whole*, or, as the word implies, something that is not expressed is implied in or to be taken with that which is expressed) as really belongs, as in those cases where they have applied the term. For example, FAMOSUS requires MALUS, or some equivalent term; or rather, FAMA, the noun on which the adjective is formed, requires MALA; for FAMA of itself means merely a saying or report: when, therefore, a *dyslogistic*, i. e. taken in a bad sense, it had

originally *mala* or some equivalent word connected with it.

Not to dwell longer on what is so very obvious, that proof and illustration are alike redundant; this seems the proper place to explain a matter connected with it, not quite so evident, and which, therefore, has been very little considered, not only by the common class of writers on Philology and Logic and *Metaphysics*; but even by the acute Horne Tooke, whose antipathy to such writings as those of Harris and Lord Monboddo, (highly distinguished, it is true, by inanity or flatulency,) seems, in some instances, to have obscured his understanding or biassed his judgment. That all words have originally a distinct, separate, independent meaning of their own, is a point which he has laboured with as much success as acuteness; but there is another consideration which (so far as we remember) he has overlooked, or which he has refused to admit, viz. that there is a *syntactic* as well as *verbal* meaning; i. e. there is a meaning effected by *composition*, which cannot exist without it; for no word or number of words can, by any possibility, convey that signification which is conveyed by a sentence, any more than the figures of arithmetic can indicate separately what they do in every possible mode of combination. The supposition, indeed, would be as absurd as to believe that a thing can be and not be at the same time. Now, though we cannot say that the meaning of words in composition, or, when put together to make a sen-

tence, is independent of that meaning which each of them has separately, (as may be inversely affirmed,) yet we can say and do affirm, that the one is wholly distinct from the other. And if this fact be lost sight of, we are likely to fall into as great errors as in supposing with Harris, that many words have no meaning at all till they are *put* together; as if composition had a creative power of producing something out of nothing. This is so absurd as hardly to merit notice; but if we do not attend to the distinct meaning produced by the combination of words, we shall be involved in not only etymologic and grammatic, but logical or metaphysical absurdities, such as those which are so plentifully spread over grammars and dictionaries and metaphysical disquisitions; not to mention the thousand controversies that literature is *heir to*. For instance; the real attempt (a very unsuccessful one) of almost the whole of the Herculean labour of Dr. Johnson is to give, not, as it professes, *verbal*, but *syntactic* meanings; and, for the same reason that it assigns ten, twenty, or thirty significations to one word, it might have assigned as many hundreds and thousands. It is, indeed, as so often pronounced, a *great* work, but it is not great enough by many thousand degrees for its real though not professed purpose; in reference to which, it is as truly *little*, as it is, in every respect, defective and unavailable.

*Syntactic* being entirely distinct (though not independent of the *verbal* as that is of the *syntactic*)



from *verbal* signification; it follows, that the *eliptic* process can proceed almost (if not altogether) interminably, without absolutely defeating (though it may and often does mar) the purpose of language; so that in process of time, there is in every sentence, every member of a sentence, every expression, and almost every word, much more implied than is expressed; much more indicated than is really signified by the sign employed; which acts as a prompter rather than reciter or narrator.

Mr. Dugald Stewart is not far from the truth when he says, that the office of language is not so much to convey ideas as to call up trains of thought in the mind. The only thing about the statement to which we demur, is the term *office*, (as if such were the original design and use and formation of language,) and the subserviency to a particular theory intended by the remark, and for which, indeed, it was evidently got up. But it is always more pleasant (in a candid state of mind) to praise than to blame; and, therefore, the author avails himself of the present opportunity of confessing his regret for the contemptuous asperity employed by him towards this writer on a former occasion, when he resolutely expressed himself with more ardour (which easily degenerates into violence) than prudence or candour. His opinion is, indeed, essentially the same: he does not consider Mr. Stewart a very profound thinker, sound reasoner, or correct writer on many subjects; but he does consider him an elegant and accom-

plished *littérateur*, and an amiable and worthy man ; who is, therefore, entitled to all the respect due to mental culture and moral excellence, and to all the civility and politeness due to a gentleman. The author is deeply sensible that sarcastic severity is a *sin which doth most easily beset him* ; and he much fears that something of it will appear in the present work, notwithstanding all his desires and endeavours to prevent it. But so far from approving, he deplors this unfortunate tendency,—because it is not less adverse to usefulness than contrary to candour and charity. Such is his serious sentiment and settled conviction ; but, as happens to all imperfect creatures, his feelings are often too powerful for his conscience ; his spirit is frequently at variance with his judgment ; for he has acquired but small mastery of himself in the difficult art of self-denial : but having most sincerely, without any false pretence or mental reservation, made the public his father-confessor, he hopes for some indulgence if not entire absolution ; and that the intellectual offering now presented, will meet with a candid reception ; for his most earnest desire and strenuous endeavour is to render it of some service to mankind.

---

# THE MUTATIONS OF VERBAL SIGNIFICATION CONSIDERED.

THAT the significations of words as well as their external form, (their spelling and pronunciation,) are changed in the course of time, is abundantly manifest. Mr. Horne Tooke, indeed, asserts—"Every word retains always one and the same meaning. Unnoticed abbreviation in construction and difference of position have caused the appearance of fluctuation, and have misled the grammarians of all languages both ancient and modern." This very explicit, unqualified, and determined statement, had long an irresistible but embarrassing effect upon the understanding of the author; and though free almost to a fault from reverence for *authority* in opinion, that of Horne Tooke could not be disregarded, as he was not a man that was apt to write unadvisedly or unsoundly; especially when not under the influence of the theory of a Northern Origin.

That a word generally retains one and the same meaning is certainly true; but that *every* word *always* retains one and the same meaning, is a proposition contrary to the most decisive evidence that can be obtained on such a subject. Indeed, it would be very unaccountable if all the grammarians of all languages both ancient and modern, had been misled by mere appearances to believe that words have secondary as well as primary meanings, if no such distinction really exist. But the question admits

of being easily settled by obvious and indisputable facts. *Sycophant*, for instance, originally meant an *informant*, (one who gave information against persons exporting figs, the exporting of which was forbidden by law at Athens,) now it means a *flatterer*: *Heathen* originally meant of or belonging to a nation (like Gentile from GENs): *Pagan* originally meant a villager; but both these terms have long meant an idolater or worshiper of false gods: *Cæsar*, at one time, was a proper name, (and, perhaps, before that, meant having *bushy hair*,) but it has long meant, as in German, *Kaiser*, and in Russ, *Czar*, an *emperor*; which word *emperor*, originally meant the commander or general of an army. A hundred such instances might be easily collected. The question here is about a fact; not the manner of accounting for it, or the process by which it was effected; which is, perhaps, after all, what Mr. Horne Tooke intended; so that we may have been all the while contending with a phantom—which, however, it is worth while to put down, if only to prevent in future such annoyance as the author once suffered when more in the dark concerning these inquiries.

The reasons of all such shiftings and changes of verbal signification are very obvious after a little inquiry and reflection. Indeed, they have already been virtually explained; and, therefore, to avoid repetition as much as possible, we shall only subjoin a few remarks.

As almost every expression (if there be any ex-

ception) is elliptical ; so with almost every word (if here, also, any exception exist) there are several ideas associated in the mind of those who employ it, besides the individual idea which it was intended and employed to indicate. The reason of this is too obvious to require any metaphysical abstrusity of theory or of explication. There is no such *entity* in either the natural or moral, physical or metaphysical world, as disconnected individuality. There is not any one single entity, be it an object of our senses, a sensation, an idea, a perception, a *notion*, (or whatever you may choose to call it,) which can exist *alone* or in absolute solitude and separation from company. [The fathomless speculations of theological metaphysics are wholly excluded from our present view.] However much, therefore, it may be intended as the sole or exclusive object of indication by any verbal sign or by any contrivance whatever, it is after all but one of a flock or group : it may be the first or largest of the flock ; it may be the most prominent or most distinguished figure in the group ; it may occupy the fore-ground in the representation, but it is always accompanied by a number of other entities. Hence what is called the principle of mental association, or the association of ideas in the mind, so liberally philosophized since the days of that original and acute and profound thinker—that consistent reasoner—that masterly writer, but ill-requited author, the Philosopher of Malmsbury ; for the poorest of those, who have borrowed from him

have liberally repaid the obligation by kicking at his reputation : and even the simple-minded Mr. Locke only mentions his writings to say that they are justly exploded. Such is the timidity or ingratitude of the disciple—who is, in this, as in so many other respects, a perfect contrast to his great Master, the teacher and founder of that philosophy of which he was such an unworthy apostle. No one surely can suppose that the author is pledged to approve or defend all the opinions of Mr. Hobbes,—some of which are as opposite to his mental habitudes as can be reasonably wished ; but even these he would have put down by the authority of reason—not by the violence of obloquy.

The fact above indicated, i. e. the complex or gregarious nature of ideas and thoughts, is the origin of many shiftings or mutations of verbal signification. Here a single illustration is better than a thousand sentences. Take an instance already adduced. *Heathen* primarily means of a *nation* ; or, taken substantively, i. e. elliptically, one of a *nation* ; and in the plural, (ETHNICOI, as it occurs in the New Testament,) the *nations* : but the *nations of the earth* were all considered by the Jews, idolaters or worshipers of false gods : the word for nations was so associated from the first with this idea, as to be in process of time identified with and indicative of it only. This *Jewish* idiom (with many other Jewish notions and idioms) accompanied the Christians (who were, at first, nearly all Jews) from Judea

into Europe, where it remains to the present day : and in the use of all such words as Heathen and Gentile, we, *Christians* and *nations* as we are, speak after the manner of the Jews. Take another instance of a similar nature and origin : *Pagan* primarily means a villager, a countryman ; or, as we have it corrupted through the medium of French organs of speech, a *peasant* : but the *peasants* continued true to the venerable religion of their fathers ; and worshipped Pavor and Pallor, and Pan and Priapus, in the good old way of their first faith and early associations, long after the citizens and burgesses of Rome and of the large towns (for in these, missionaries usually first erect the standard of conversion, or secretly endeavour that the *little leaven may leaven the whole lump* of a large population) had apostatized from Heathenism to Christianity. Hence, the word for villager or peasant was associated in the minds of the Christians, (i. e. the town's-people,) with the idea of idolater or worshiper of false gods ; and being thus associated, it was soon identified with and exclusively indicative of that idea, like the term *heathen*. A thousand such illustrations might be given of the same process, of a similar changing or shifting of verbal signification : so that Horne Tooke wrote more confidently than advisedly when he asserted, that every word retains always one and the same meaning. It is true, as he supposes, that abbreviation in construction and change of *position*, (though what he meant by change of position is not very ob-

vious,) do cause *appearances* of fluctuations, where no fluctuations really exist; but there are many changes of verbal meaning which cannot thus be accounted for, and which are explicable only on the principle of the association of ideas and thoughts in the human mind, resulting from and answering to the complex nature of things as existing in the universe, and, therefore, as presented to the human senses.

*Metonymy*, (like *Synecdoche*, &c. &c. &c.,) as handed down from doating, garrulous antiquity, (somewhat blind as well, for mere speech is usually the last faculty greatly impaired,) and as taught in the schools, (those nurseries and sanctuaries of implicit faith and sacred devotion towards venerable doctrines and high authorities,) is mingled with error and muffled in confusion; but it has evidently a basis or substance of truth: and neither Quintilian nor Vossius was wide of the mark of correct definition, when it was defined by the first, "The putting of one word for another," and by the last, "A *trope*, [if disposed to pun, we would say this is a *trip*,] which changes the name of things that are naturally united, but in such a manner as that one is not the essence of the other." The disciple is seldom greater than his master in the art of thinking and of expressing thought; though he usually excels him in the commenting art of verbosity. Ecce Aristotle and Plato; Locke and Hobbes; Vossius and Quintilian.

---



## THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF MUTATION IN VERBAL SIGNIFICATION.

THESE may be summed up in the following particulars :

1. When the name for a class of beings comes in process of time to indicate a circumstance or peculiarity connected with them : as, *Heathen* or *Pagan* to denote Idolater ; Scythian, Goth, Turk, Tartar, Vandal, &c., to denote barbarity and cruelty ; or any person remarkable for these qualities ; *Jew*, to indicate any one remarkably false and overreaching, &c. &c. Here a hundred instances might be given, all agreeing as to *genus*, but differing as to *species*.
2. When names, originally descriptive of office, agency, &c., come to be merely obscure titles or empty compliments : as, Duke, Marquis, Count, Earl, Lord, Knight, Squire, Mr., Sir, Madam, Lady, Miss, &c. &c. All such words may be compared to the Roman emperors, who were great whilst living, but who acquired deification by death ; (and if the *body be dead without the spirit*, so surely is a word without the *meaning* ;) only this business of deification has been rather too abundant in the supply to keep up the value of the commodity ; and such titles as Lord, Knight, Doctor, &c., are becoming ticklish distinctions.
3. When old names remain, though that to which they were originally applied, and of which they were descriptive, has ceased, or has been superseded by

something else: as, *paper*, originally the name of an Egyptian flag or leaf; *volume*, i. e. something rolled up—a scroll: Burg, Burgh, Burrow, was originally a fortification or fortified place; *province*, originally signified a *conquest*, or country gained by successful war.

Words of this description are very numerous.

4. When words, expressive of action or quality, are appropriated to objects as common or proper names. This is the most prolific origin of verbal multiplication or vocabular augmentation; for thus an indefinite number of nouns are produced by a few verbs and adjectives: thus, *fact*, *feat*, *fight*, *fit*, &c., are all originally one word; and thus the names of many animals and natural objects, as well as of metaphysical entities, are resolvable into one adjective, or one verb; which one adjective or verb is so exceedingly diversified in spelling and pronunciation, partly by design and partly from accident, as to seem not one and the same word, but a great multitude of separate and independent words: hence, one of the causes of tautology, inanity, obscurity, and absurdity, so often observable in the speeches and writings of men.

5. When a word shifts from a primary to a secondary meaning, or, when it passes over to a concomitant idea, or from the cause to the effect, or *vice versa*. N. B. This is essentially the same as No. 1, only in a more comprehensive form to prevent mistake.

6. When a word is employed metaphorically; for the very term *metaphor*, as also *trope*, (*figure* does not,) imports a changing or turning of the word to another use than that which it originally had.

N. B. Many words have lost their *literal* and retain only their metaphoric import or use; many have passed back from their metaphoric to a *literal*, or more properly, to an *unmetaphoric* application.

---

#### VERBAL DIVERSITIES AS TO RANK OR RESPECTABILITY.

As the members of a community range in different classes of political rank, so do the words of a language. There are here, also, high and low and middle classes. On these distinctions a few remarks will suffice.

1. A large class of the lower orders of words has been already indicated; for those gross verbal corruptions which have originated with the ignorant and the uneducated, (and which have not descended from Gothic antiquity, when ignorance had the honour of being universal,) are radically vulgar, and permanently doomed to hopeless degradation; for though butchers' and barbers' sons may mount the *bench* and ascend to the highest station near the throne, their intellectual offspring—their verbal productions, never rise to the dignity of polite usage.

2. Many words are low or vulgar for the same

reason that old-fashioned garbs are so considered; for there is a fashion in language as in other things, and, like that of the *world*, it is ever *passing away*. New terms and expressions and modes of speech are constantly displacing the old, which linger among the lower classes long after they have been discarded by those who are at the fountain of influence; and the very circumstance of obsolete words and expressions being found only, or chiefly, among the lower classes in society, stamps their character and seals their fate. Thus the same words, which are very honourable in one dialect of a language and part of a country, are very dishonourable in another; and this forms one of the most obstinate difficulties which the natives of Scotland have to contend with, in speaking and writing English agreeably to polite usage: for as the dialect of the North is older by three or four centuries than that of the South, persons accustomed to the old-fashioned dialect are apt to imagine that they are keeping the very best company when guilty of employing most vulgar and disreputable expressions. This fact accounts not only for the *Scotticisms*, but for the *vulgarisms* so often detected in the productions of those beyond the Tweed, who have written with freedom and energy; as it accounts also, on the other side, for the artificial stiffness and polished feebleness of those Scottish authors who sacrifice all to *taste*—who dread nothing so much as the imputation of vulgarity, and who covet nothing so much as the reputation of elegant writing. It would be

easy to produce instances ; but they might appear invidious ; and we have endeavoured to indicate, in the Dictionary, the *rank* and *character*, as well as other attributes of words.

We have noticed (and the verb *notice* is too convenient to be lightly parted with), that many words become vulgar in process of time, merely from being old-fashioned ; but old fashions are frequently brought up again ; and there is a sort of sentimental *archaism* raging at present among the lovers of the *olden* literature, who, ever and *anon*, cite an obsolete phraseology for the very *nonce* of showing its *whilom* beauty, too long suffered to wrinkle unadmired in neglected desuetude. If utility could be put in competition with sentimentality, we would address a word of inquiry, or of exhortation, to these admirers of the antique in literature ; but the fit will not last long ; for the sentimental passion is extremely inconstant : and though some words that had become both vulgar and obsolete, have been thrown up to the very top of fashionable literature, there is some danger of a reaction, and that many of the happiest phrases of Shakspeare will be hackneyed into contemptible vulgarity.

3. Many words become vulgar, in course of time, in consequence of being associated with gross objects, actions, and ideas ; and the notion of grossness is every day becoming more fastidious in a state of progressive refinement. This is one of the most operative causes of mutation in living languages ; and it is

amusing to observe the variety of attempts that are made to clothe gross entities and vulgar ideas in decent and polite phraseology, and the rapid succession of terms that are first degraded and then discarded in the performance of this ungracious duty. Not to present the most obvious, and, therefore, the most disgusting instances, i. e. to our refined notions and sensibilities, take the following: *Guts* was, at one time, a very decent term, and fit to appear at the very top of Saxon literature; but it became so very rude, upon long and familiar acquaintance, as to be wholly unbearable in any genteel family, and was turned off for no fault in the world but vulgarity: its place was supplied by *Belly*, which (as *Guts*, indeed, before it) was brought all the way from Italy for the sake of gentility. *Belly* was long considered a very well-bred term, and fit to appear in the very best company; and ladies and gentlemen, masters and misses, might, without fear, and without shame, freely converse with it either in public or in private. But servants will become rude when they remain long in place, and *Belly* (though possessing every advantage of foreign extraction and musical sweetness) having become offensively familiar, and disgustingly vulgar, has been turned off without a character, and must be content with such low and poor places as can be found in town and country, but can never hope to enter a genteel family. For the present, *Stomach* and *Abdomen*, two learned foreigners, supply, between them, as well as they can, the place of

*Belly*; but they are only upon trial, and there is no chance whatever that they will long give satisfaction. It is supposed, indeed, that genteel people, finding so much plague and trouble with such attendants, will contrive, in future, to do without them altogether. They have already greatly reduced their establishment; but retrenchment may, and doubtless will, proceed yet further; for if such conveniences, or (as would seem) such indispensable requisites as *necessary*, *privy*, *daghill*, can be well spared, why may not such vile luxuries as *sweat*, *spittle*, not to add any word that comes in a more questionable shape to agitate our sensibilities? The fact is, that Pantomime can be successfully substituted for much of the old *vulgar* Drama of real life. It may be urged, that all this results from false refinement and delicacy, and that things ought to be called by their proper names. But this is a Utopian doctrine wherever there is such an *entity* as *refinement*; and when the question is about the *degree* or the *extent*, who is to be judge or sovereign arbiter? Who has the right and the power to say, authoritatively, *Hitherto shalt thou come and no further*? The calling of gross things by their proper names is one of the privileges of the *dead languages*.

Many instances similar to the above might be presented; but one more will be sufficient. *Whore*, *Harlot*, *Strumpet*, were once considered as decent names as the person designated by them deserved; and no English mouth refused to utter them: but

in process of refinement it was discovered that vice loses half its turpitude by losing all its grossness; and the old ugly names, whore, harlot, strumpet, were superseded by *Bonaroba*, *Chère-amie*, common woman of the town, girl of the town, street-walker, &c. &c.; for no sooner is a word or expression applied for the purpose of a designation to that which is essentially base, than it is contaminated with vulgarity, and then discarded as wholly unbefitting a genteel mouth. Putting the *bona roba* of polite phraseology on Madam Meretrix, cannot save or redeem her character; but her contaminating influence degrades every gallant protector identified with her reputation. From one, learn all; what happens in this case, happens in a thousand instances; hence an ever-operating cause of mutation in living languages, which can never be *fixed* so as to be rendered immutable, any more than time can be arrested in its course.

4. There is a set of low words and phrases which originate in wretched metaphor, or in allusions to things of a mean and sordid nature, such as the following: to *curry favour*, i. e. literally taken, (which is always the test of propriety as to metaphor,) to procure the favour of any one by scratching his back; hence that truly graphic substantive, *claw-back*; to *oram a subject* or *person* down any one's throat, or to *saddle him* with a heavy expense, or to *blink his argument*, or to *haul him* over the coals,



or to put him in a *cleft-stick*. All such expressions can never be elevated into lasting dignity, however closely they may be associated with the genius of a Swift or a Butler (just as *low-life* may be associated with the genius of Hogarth); nay, though they may have the high sanction of parliamentary authority; and certainly, though not omnipotent, it can produce very extraordinary effects upon the verbal currency of the kingdom; so that instead of the Parliament being that *collevarium* of corruption, which some represent, it is evidently a fountain of influence as well as of political power.

It is not necessary to indicate the respectable classes of words, which are of course too numerous to be easily arranged under distinct denominations. In general those terms and expressions, and modes of speech, which have the highest political, intellectual, literary, and scientific origin, possess the greatest dignity; for the general tendency is for words to sink from a higher to a lower—not to rise from a lower to a higher rank. Instances of the latter process are, for the most part, those of extraordinary individual merit. Thus, terms which were at first objected to as Scotticisms (such as the verb *notice*, &c.,) and provincialisms, or as too technical and plebeian for classic composition, have, in course of time, risen to respectability in the language. All such words as are evidently useful, peculiarly convenient, distinctive, and descriptive, are sure of adop-

tion, whence soever derived: they are a kind of professional adventurers that are sure to make their way in the world, and to come into general practice.

There is a very large number of words, found in books and dictionaries, which do not properly rank either with the high or the low—the genteel and respectable, or the mean and vulgar order: and which may be designated the *awkward squad*, or pedantic company; except that their proper name would be *legion, for they are many*. They are all large, unwieldy, clumsy, awkward, and uncouth, as Dr. Johnson. They never had any recommendation but their learned bulkiness and strangeness; and therefore they have been unsuccessful candidates for admission into general and established usage: their proper place, therefore, is, (where we mean to put them,) an old musty glossary.

All our words, indeed, are, properly speaking, of learned origin; and many of them may have been introduced unnecessarily; but mere pedantry has had very little share in their introduction. They have, for the most part, been adopted, not from the *classic*, but from the *low* and (strange as the association may appear) *philosophic* Latin; not directly from the schools, or from mere scholars; but from the *professions*, and in connexion with the arts and sciences, and institutions, and inventions, and improvements, and business of life. The schools and colleges are, indeed, distant reservoirs of the regular supplies; but the cisterns whence they are directly

received, the immediate channels of communication, are Government, Legislation, Jurisprudence, Theology, Physic, &c. &c.; or, to include all in two words, the *sciences* and the *arts*. The great agents in the formation of our language (as of every language) have been *authors* (such as ever had any influence—for there are many writings that never had readers) and orators, legislators and lawyers, ministers of state and ministers of religion, physicians and apothecaries, inventors and improvers in all the sciences and arts which are in any respect connected with the wants and wishes of men. These are the influential, the assimilating, the transmuting agents of every people. Hence the obvious reason, as before intimated, (not to apply the fact to other questions at present,) why the English Language is partly Greek, but chiefly Latin.

---

#### VOCABULAR REDUNDANCY AND DEFICIENCY.

THESE extremes not only meet in the same language; but in proportion as it is remarkable for the one, it is also remarkable for the other. The most defective and least philosophic languages present these attributes so strikingly as to render them obvious to every inquirer. Take, for example, the Hebrew and the Saxon; and making all due allowance for the *sacred* character of the former (and if the reader chooses, its divine origin); they are, perhaps,

pretty equal: i. e. when considered as philosophic instruments, or intellectual *apparatus*. No offence is intended to the lovers of Saxon and of Hebrew literature: and having been at some trouble to form an opinion, they ought not surely to feel aggrieved when that opinion is expressed.

Hebrew and Saxon (as all languages in a greater or less degree) are remarkable for vocabular redundancy and vocabular deficiency: they have too many and too few words: they have too many of one sort and too few of another: they have a superfluous multitude of words of general import, but they are poor and destitute of particular, distinctive, and definitive terms: they will furnish you with a thousand names for one and the same *entity* (like the adorable Arabic, to which its worshipers give the praise and glory of a *thousand* names for a sword); but there are a thousand entities for which they supply no name.

Both these opposite qualities are evidently great faults—not perfections in language. As to the one, there never, probably, has been but one opinion, and that sufficiently correct; but concerning the other, much error and confusion have prevailed. One will eulogize the copiousness of a language by exaggerating the number of names which it possesses for one object; another, like Dr. Blair, will affirm, that there are no two words, in any one language, that are precisely synonymous. The last is one of those random positions which are so freely

hazarded on all subjects, concerning which, men consider themselves fully justified, by established usage, in thinking little and saying much. The usual parade of verbal copiousness is, as if a savage were to demonstrate how extraordinary his wealth is by exhibiting a thousand *bows*, kept for his own exclusive use; or, as if a mechanic were to prove the amazing abundance of his tools by exhibiting a thousand hammers. But arguments and illustrations are equally misplaced when applied to questions so strikingly obvious, that mere statement is sufficient refutation.

What is wanted is a sufficient number of apt tools or verbal instruments for every intellectual purpose. Tried by this test, the English has, perhaps, as little imperfection as any language, ancient or modern; though it has much useless and cumbrous copiousness of one description of terms, and considerable deficiency of another. It has (like every other language) too many terms of *general* and too few of *particular* import: it has too many generic and too few specific and *individualic* terms: there are a thousand names for one logical genus; but many of the logical species and individuals have no names assigned to them. These two opposite faults (which are mutually proportionate) are two of the grand imperfections of language; and principal causes of much of the error, deception, misunderstanding, controversy, and other evils which have prevailed, and, probably, will prevail to the end of the world: for

if the *moral* nature of human beings were as good as that of angels, they could not rise to any very high state of perfectibility without a much less imperfect instrument of verbal intercommunication than they yet possess. We are not very sanguine concerning remedies for any existing evils; but it is something to indicate their causes; the knowledge of which, if not available for any great improvement, is at least likely to remove the mental malady of false theory.

---

#### LOGICAL DIVERSITIES OF VERBAL SIGNIFICATION.

It is very probable, if not quite certain, that the author would not have invited attention to the distinctions indicated above, but for a small publication of the acute and discriminating Jeremy Bentham, entitled, *A TABLE OF THE SPRINGS OF HUMAN ACTION*; which possesses the *multum in parvo* of logical availableness, in a much greater degree than could be supposed from the silent neglect which it seems to have experienced.

There can be no doubt that the *fact* so distinctly stated in the *Table of the Springs of Human Action*, was previously as familiar to minds in any considerable degree logical, as was the *fact* or *principle* of *mental association* before it was so distinctly stated by Mr. Hobbes. Indeed, some remarks of the latter (as, where he distinguishes among different names applied to the same thing, according as it is *liked* or *misliked*) approach so very nearly to the

very distinctions employed by Mr. Bentham, that the author concluded, (so reluctant are we to concede the claim of originality,) that the Philosopher of Westminster had borrowed from the Philosopher of Malmsbury. But to his surprise he found, by conversing with Mr. Bentham, that the writings of Hobbes were almost (if not altogether) wholly unknown to him, owing to an antipathy contracted in early life; which is not wonderful when we consider the political antithesis, or the political bias and temperament of the two men; who, but for this and one other circumstance, belong more to the same logical species of intellect than any two philosophers, ancient or modern, concerning whom the author can venture a critical judgment. What that other circumstance is, the discerning reader (i. e. in such matters) will perceive when reminded of the reiterated declaration of the author of *Tripes*, that he distrusted nothing so much as his own *elocution* (what we now term *diction*); and when it is intimated, that his *words were few and well ordered*.

The philosophic genius of Bacon naturally fixed his attention on *things* (long the exclusive objects of consideration with Mr. Locke, if his own testimony be admitted) rather than *words*; but the intimate connexion of the last with the first, in the reasonings and discourses of men, could not escape the notice of a man of such intuitive sagacity—such grasp of comprehension—such inductive dexterity—such extended range of reflection: and what he has so often

reiterated concerning *the dry, pure light of the understanding, not drenched in the will and affections*, has evidently as much reference to the verbal apparatus employed by the mind, as to the state and actings of the mind itself.

But it is not necessary to refer to such high intellectual evidence (for we admit no authorities and precedents in the common law of logic or *perfect reason* of philosophy) to come to a decision concerning the verbal distinctions already indicated, and now to be stated and explained. The diversities of terms, as, *fond, invidious, descriptive*, are familiar to the mouths and ears of men: all we intend, therefore, is to render, if possible, that which is already in their possession of more value to them, by showing the uses to which it may be applied: and they are not usually averse to information and advice how to improve and increase their property; especially when given in the spirit of meekness and charity, or candour and kindness; and it is our earnest desire to have such a recommendation and introduction to a favourable interview with their understanding, apart from the sinister influence of all such evil counsellors as prejudices and passions. It is our sincere regret that we do not bring more conciliatory qualifications to our task; and that we are under the necessity of employing the assistance of men whose very names rouse the prejudices and antipathies of many readers. But such readers should be admonished to practise self-denial; without which, they cannot be the dis-



ciples of truth: they ought to give a candid reception to sound principles, even if presented by the ill-favoured enemy of all righteousness and social order (and even he is supposed to have published truth); or if associated with the most malign author that ever appeared in the ascendant of literature; much more when proceeding from a philosopher of *radical* philanthropy, whatever *radical* objections may attach to some of his opinions.

All words that have any import, (for some are as destitute of import as mummies are of life,) are obviously distinguishable into *passioned* and *unimpassioned*, or *passionate* and *dispassionate*: the one indicate thoughts, the other sentiments; i. e. the one indicate mere perceptions or acts of the understanding (the *dry pure light* of reason, as Bacon terms it); the other indicate thoughts as imbued with (or as Bacon terms it, *drenched* in) the affections: in the one, logical entities are presented unaccompanied by any judicial decision concerning them by the affections; in the other, they are accompanied by a sentence of approbation or disapprobation: in the one, there is no indication of *feeling*, any more than if the mind were pure abstract intellect, incapable of emotion; in the other, there is an expression of feeling, either of like or of dislike, either of pleasure or of displeasure, or (what is the lowest degree of the same thing) either of approbation or of disapprobation.

As all words are either impassioned or unimpas-

sioned; so all the former obviously admit of being ranged in two opposite classes, answering to the opposite states or acts of mind, which are expressed by the terms approbation and disapprobation, affection and disaffection. Hence, after separating all words into impassioned and unimpassioned, Mr. Bentham again divides the first division into *eulogistic* and *dyslogistic*, and thence denominates the unimpassioned class *neutrologistic*.

Perhaps the scientific purpose intended, is as well accomplished by these as by any *designatives* that could be invented. If there be any objection to them, it is, that they are not sufficiently popular. Perhaps *approbative*, *disapprobative*, and *neuter* or *neutral*, would be more obvious distinctions: *non-probative* might be objectionable. But what is wanted for such purposes is a designative phraseology of fixed and definite import: that which is least popular is most likely to ensure these qualities; and it is a tribute of respect due to inventors and improvers not hastily to reject or lightly to alter the terms employed by them; so that we have no wish to change those of Mr. Bentham.

The distinctions indicated above admit of easy illustration; for there is hardly a sentence or expression in any language which will not serve the purpose. Take the following: *Man is naturally mortal*, is plainly a *neutrologistic* sentence, and *mortal* is particularly the *neutrologistic* word; for it expresses a fact admitted by the understanding, in

the admitting and expressing of which those entities called prejudices have no share ; those entities called affections stand quietly by neutral spectators : or, to write less rhetorically and more logically, there are no prejudices and affections in existence as to the fact enunciated, any more than there are waves when water is perfectly still ; for passions are related to what we call mind, as waves are to what we call water. We do, indeed, speak of waves and passions, (though contrary to the very letter of the phraseology,) as if they were permanent and stable, never-ceasing entities ; but this is one of the many unfortunate modes of speech which fill our minds with perplexity, and our discourses with absurdity. We must not, however, diverge from the point proposed.

Concerning the neutrologistic character of the sentence—*man is naturally mortal*, there can be no controversy. It is one of those (comparatively few) positions which never produce difference of opinion or of affection ; for no human being was ever yet offended any more than gratified by this affirmation ; or angry with his neighbour for making the assertion : but substitute almost any other adjective for mortal in the sentence, and it is immediately perceived to be either *eulogistic* or *dyslogistic*. Thus : *Man is naturally wicked, or false, or cruel*. Each of these adjectives is *dyslogistic* : it expresses not a simple conviction of the understanding, but a sentiment, i. e. an opinion imbued with what we call

the affectionis; and so widely do some minds differ from the sentiment as to consider it *false*, and *cruel*, and *wicked*. Take the other extreme: Man is naturally *sincere*; or *kind*, or *virtuous*. Here each of the adjectives is highly *eulogistic*: it indicates not an indisputable fact or mere admission of the understanding; but a sentiment of the mind connected with feeling. To discover how *impassioned* all such words both of the *eulogistic* and *dyslogistic* kind are, nothing more is necessary than to observe their usual effects upon the tempers and conduct of men. What rapturous applause or violent disapprobation will they not produce in private companies and public assemblies, according to their respective relations to the sentimentality of the persons present! What mutual affection or hatred will they not effect! They may be compared to the ensigns of hostile factions, round which kinsmen rally, they know not why, for mutual slaughter. It is even dangerous to mediate between the *eulogistic* and *dyslogistic* belligerents; and the author expects no favour from either party for the neutrologistic service which he kindly offers.

A thousand illustrations could be employed with as much ease as that one instance employed above; which was adopted for no other reason than it happened to be the first which presented itself: but one instance is as sufficient as a thousand examples; for we write only for those who are at the trouble to think; and who do not require a mass of explanation. Supposing the reader to be now in possession

of the three logical distinctions of verbal signification—it will be proper to attend to some important circumstances directly connected with them.

From the very nature and general habitudes of the human mind; from the history of man; from our own observation and experience, it might be inferred that language has much of an impassioned and little of an unimpassioned character; that it is composed chiefly of eulogistic and dyslogistic, and contains few neutrologistic terms. Human beings as infallibly impress their own likeness upon their mental and moral, as upon their natural offspring; they create not only religious and political systems, but *words* after their own image. Hence the obvious similitude of idiomatic peculiarity to national character; or the correspondence which exists between the *genius* of a language and the genius of a people; for according as the one is more or less *impassioned*, (not to advert to other circumstances here,) so is the other. But whatever natural, mental, moral, and political diversities may exist in mankind, they all agree in this, that they are more under the dominion of passion than the guidance of reason: hence, every language (even the wisest, comparatively considered) has much of the attribute of absurdity: and every language (even the most neutrologistic) has much of a *passionate* and little of a *dispassionate* character. Every language, therefore, is very fit for Rhetoric; (taken in the widest possible import,) but very unfit for Logic; is an apt and powerful weapon of passion

but a very untoward and defective instrument of reason : wonderfully invented and admirably constructed for all the sentimental purposes of poesy and all the demagogue purposes of oratory ; but ill adapted to the plain practical uses of sound philosophy.

We are not willing to be more explicit or particular at present, or to follow the above statements to all their obvious consequences : not that we are afraid to storm the strongest holds of established opinion, or to do violence to the most sacred idols of sentimental prejudice ; but prudence dictates forbearance.

Persons who are neither fondly nor resolutely sentimental may be ready to say, Why preach to us the humiliating doctrine of the radical depravity of language, unless you can give us comfortable assurances of a miraculous regeneration ? But it is surely of some importance to know things as they truly are, whether we can change them or not ; for without that knowledge there is no chance of improvement. There is very little reason to hope for a perfect language ; but in proportion as we understand the nature, and become acquainted with the imperfections, of that which we have, the more are we likely to make a proper use of it ; and to guard against the errors and prejudices and other evils which result from its unfitness for logical purposes : the important principle of *utility* will be more steadily kept in view ; inquiry after truth will be more successful ; dis-

cussion will be more fair and honourable, and the temper of *disputants* more candid. He who strives not for rhetorical display or polemic victory ; who aims only at truth in theory and utility in practice ; who wishes not to take any unfair advantage of the understanding of those to whom he speaks or writes, will endeavour to employ neutrologistic phraseology : and he who is determined to prevent, if possible, others from taking an unfair advantage of his understanding, will carefully watch the verbal movements and will guard against the stratagems and assaults of impassioned language, consisting of eulogistic and dyslogistic terms. And if he do not absolutely renounce the mental luxuries of rhetorical arts and productions, he will be as little imposed upon by them as by the drama and the opera and masquerade ; which he knows to be got up for effect ; and to have as little connexion with right opinions and natural feelings, as the fancies and passions of men have with sound reason.

Before leaving this subject, it may be useful to subjoin a few distinct remarks.

1. Out of the most multitudinous vocabulary, (as that, for instance, of Dr. Johnson, greatly enlarged by Dr. Todd, who has recommended it to the public by enriching it with many *thousands* of added words,) very few terms, comparatively considered, can be selected that are absolutely neutrologistic ; i. e. purely intellectual, without any mixture of sentiment and prejudice and passion. The whole verbal multitude

(with the exception of a mere handful of neutrals) belong either to the eulogistic or dyslogistic faction. They may be distinguished by many shades or *grades* of character as partisans ; but they all divide and vote either with the *Ayes* or the *Noes*. They are all *approbative* or *disapprobative*, respectful or disrespectful, *admirative* or contemptuous, fond or invidious. Some merely nod assent or dissent—else say *ay* or *no* to the question ; others cannot help accompanying their vote with a strong expression of feeling : some hail the decision with the most rapturous applause ; others assail it with violent explosions of hatred.

Between two such powerful factions it is not wonderful that the interests of such neutrologistic entities as truth and utility should often suffer (and it is become a kind of axiom that all parties are against the individual that is of no party) ; or that rhetoric (taken in the widest import) should produce wonderful effects ; for the dextrous rhetor is almost as potent as Orpheus ; or, that even concerning the plainest questions which can be presented to the human understanding, there should be endless debate—interminable controversy.

2. The Neutrologistic terms of a language are not only very few ; they are liable to be violated and prostituted so as to become as mischievous as those base-born words which had, originally, a eulogistic or dyslogistic nature. Take a recent instance : what adjective could well be more neutrologistic than *ra-*



*dical* was only a few years ago? But it had the misfortune to be adopted by a particular class of political reformers; and the consequence has been, that this humble member of the vocabulary is already strongly dyslogistic—deeply imbued with contempt and aversion as applied in the speeches and writings of all such men as rely more on the force of nicknames than the force of arguments; and, to many a mind, *radical* is nearly, if not quite, as odious and exasperating as *democrat* or *revolutionist*. In this manner have thousands of words been perverted from their primitive simplicity of unimpassioned import; and when once thus corrupted, it is as impossible for them to recover their original innocence as it is for a prostitute to regain her virgin purity. There are almost numberless instances of dispassionate, becoming passionate phraseology; but we know not of a single instance of a contrary process or transmutation.

3. Eulogistics and dyslogistics are properly *antithetic* or rather *antipathetic* to one another; but many words are made to perform both parts: thus *saint* is a gracious eulogistic, as employed by one description of persons; but a most ungracious dyslogistic as employed by another: in the diction of Mr. Wilberforce, it betokeneth religious affection; in that of William Cobbett, it expresses unholy disaffection: in the one, it indicates sincere partiality; in the other, *sarcastic* bitterness. Any eulogistic may thus be sarcastically converted into a dyslogistic: hence

many terms have the two opposite characters at the same time, according to the tempers and opinions of the agents employing them : and hence, also, the radical and permanent change from the one extreme of fixed and universally received import to the other, which words experience in process of time ; for either may be changed into the other : but in the struggle between what is termed the *good* and the *bad* sense of a word, the evil spirit generally prevails : for we have many examples of beautiful and admirable *approbatives* being changed in course of time into such ugly *disapprobatives* as to be quite frightful ; but we have few examples of the contrary process. The reason is obvious : ridicule, if not the test of truth, is a test which few people are willing to have either their persons or their opinions tried by ; and they as naturally shrink from odious charges. When, therefore, dyslogistic phraseology is applied to that in which persons are interested or implicated—they feel like a man accused of a horrible offence ; who is willing to change not only his abode but his very name rather than encounter the imputation or bear the odium. Such words as *despot* and *tyrant* were once very loyal names ; but it would be libel or treason to apply them now to such persons as they used to designate : *pedant* and *pedagogue* were once of very innocent and laudable import ; but the persons so designated became ashamed of their antique name, and consider themselves insulted or persecuted when it is now applied to them : *parson* and *priest*

were at no great distance of time very respectable and even honourable names ; but instead of being proud of them or making a noble stand for their eulogistic dignity against the *lewd* laity ; the reverend gentlemen, to whom they were applied, became ashamed of them ; and were willing to assume such a mean, servile name as *minister*, or such a clumsy designation as *clergyman* ; and if these be fated to become dyslogistic they also will be discarded : and, owing to some ugly associations, that high verbal dignitary *bishop* is in considerable jeopardy.

It was remarked in another place, that the tendency is for the members of the vocabulary to sink, not to rise in the scale of dignity ; as we have numerous instances of polite words and phrases becoming vulgar, but few or no examples of a contrary process. The same holds with the eulogistic and dyslogistic distinctions : we have almost numberless instances of the former sinking into the latter, but few instances of the latter rising into the former : and these few instances are only found when the persons or parties intended to be mortified and disgraced by a dyslogistic designation or *nickname*, take kindly to it and glory in it : for then the malignant intention of their enemies is defeated ; and a reaction commences in favour of the persecuted. *Christian* (as well as *Nazarene*) was, doubtless, at first, a nickname ; but the persons thus designated took kindly to the invidious distinction and gloried in it, as well as in that ignominious peculiarity of their religion,

the *cross*. The result was, that both rose in process of time into the highest estimation. *Quaker* was originally a nickname; but the *Friends* who have always possessed too many respectable qualities to be a degraded *caste*, (for in that case the most honoured designation ever invented must have sunk with them,) took, if not cordially, at least, patiently and meekly to their nickname, and described themselves as the people commonly called *Quakers*: the result is, that *Quaker* is become a eulogistic, or, at least, has lost all its dyslogistic import: and it is as respectable in common usage as their own fond *Friend*, with less quaintness. *Whig* also was a nickname; but the persons so designated took cordially to the invidious designation, and, like Paul with the cross and the name of Christ, gloried in it, and thus converted it into an honourable title and political talisman, whilst any character for political honesty and consistency remained with the party; for when a party is degraded, all its names and distinctions are degraded with it. The courtly cavaliers were too much devoted to eulogistic legitimacy, too fastidious about titles and orders to take kindly to the low, vulgar, upstart title of *Tory*. The consequence is, that *Toryism*, as a designation, is still in disgrace; but had its secret friends taken heartily to it, and rallied round it, and gloried in it, they would have found it a far more talismanic watch-word than the name of Pitt, with all the supplementary appendages of throne and altar, and king and country.

All that was intended by these instances was illustration; which being, it is hoped, fully accomplished, it is unnecessary to detain the reader longer with the subject; but there is one other consideration that deserves to be stated.

It is now sufficiently apparent, perhaps, that as language has little of a dispassionate and much of a passionate character, so many entities both physical and metaphysical (for the last term would be really useful if not abused) have no neutrologistic designation: they are never presented to the understanding as mere strangers, whose character is to be discovered by acquaintance; for their name proclaims their character: it is either a badge of honour or a badge of disgrace; and those wearing it can have no interview with the understanding, absolutely free from all prejudice or sinister agency; but are introduced by the high authority of universal consent either as approved or condemned, as good or bad, as amiable friends or hateful enemies.

The entities that have three distinct sets of names, i. e. neutrologistic, eulogistic, and dyslogistic, answering to the views and feelings of the persons employing them, are sufficiently numerous (even if no other cause existed) to produce incalculable diversity of opinion, endless controversy, and factious hostility.

It may be said, What do all these remarks prove, but that we are essentially sentimental and *emotionate*; and, that if there be any thing wrong about eulogistic and dyslogistic entities, it is not so much

our language as it is ourselves that are in fault? Be it so: we do not dispute the fact: we only endeavour to render you duly sensible of it. Perhaps that which has been indicated is a great excellence in our own composition as well as in our language; and infinitely preferable to the *dry, pure light of reason*; just as many prefer fiction to fact, and romance to history: only recognize the wide difference between them, and the opposition of the one to the other; and do not attempt to make a precious compound of things so radically incompatible; for nothing surely can well be more blundering than to mistake rhetoric for logic; or to attempt to unite and intermix them; or to hope to reason sentimentally and to *sentimentalize* rationally. If, therefore, true theory and sound philosophy, increase of knowledge and intellectual improvement, less misunderstanding and more candour, more deliberative discussion and less illiberal and angry controversy, more of enlightened union and less of blind factious hostility, &c. &c; if all these were nothing, it is, at least, something to avoid the charge of absolute folly.

---

### THE GRAMMATIC DISTINCTIONS OF WORDS.

WE commence with what are commonly called *the parts of speech* ; which are usually said to be nine in all ; but which Mr. Tooke, as well as others before him, reduced to two at the most. Many of this author's remarks are not only acute but just ; and it will be proper to examine what he has advanced concerning the different kinds of words.

---

### THE DOCTRINE OF HORNE TOOKE EXAMINED.

MR. HORNE TOOKE (as well as Plato and other ancients, and Vossius and other moderns) resolves all the *parts of speech* into noun and verb. Thus far he is very explicit and very positive ; but farther he deposeth not so peremptorily as a witness is wont to give evidence who testifieth what he *knoweth of his own knowledge*. He affirms, indeed, that the verb is properly a noun ; but he adds, that it is something more than a noun : what that *something* more or *verbalizing* property is, he either could not or would not inform the world. Here the sprightly author of the *Diversions*, (which are most diverting when least instructive,) coquets with the reader ; or, what is more probable, *shies* at his subject ; for though his manner seems to say, You do not know what I have got here ; we suspect he had nothing at all, save a little affectation. We have long regretted

the destruction of his etymologic papers, (though he had, probably, good reasons for committing them to the flames; for it was, perhaps, one of the most judicious acts of his whole life,) merely from eager curiosity to learn how he was to dispose of the verb and to disengage himself from the wonderful promises which he had held out to the world: not that we think the world has suffered any material loss by the catastrophe; for without an etymologic regeneration, almost miraculous at his period of life, we consider it morally impossible for him to think a good thought or speak a right word concerning the derivation of a great part of the English language.

The opinions of Horne Tooke (though hitherto wholly barren of any important effects or useful results) have met with cordial reception: and all who now write about grammar acknowledge his authority. That acute thinker and hardy reasoner, that heretical Catholic, the late Dr. Geddes, expressed the hope of being able to prove at some future period that all verbs were originally nouns. In this opinion the learned Doctor was avowedly saying after the quondam vicar of Brentford; who also hoped to be able to accomplish very extraordinary things at some future period. Numerous learned testimonies in favour of his opinions might be adduced from recent grammatic works. The following is a pretty good synopsis of his principles: it is extracted from a recent grammar, the *ninth*, we believe, in the Saxon line of descent; and which is remarkable for nothing



so much as the author's diffidence of his own understanding, and his extreme deference for the grammatic and metaphysical inanities of other writers ; a most curious collection of which is presented to the public.

Here is the synopsis :—

“ Every abstract term in language had, originally, a sensible, palpable meaning, generally a substantive meaning. Adjectives are, originally, either nouns or verbs. Pronouns take their rise from nouns, verbs, and numerals. Articles, or, more properly, definitives, are nothing but pronouns used in a particular sense, and for a particular purpose. Interjections are chiefly verbs ; some are substantives. Adverbs, for the most part, originate in adjectives ; a few are verbs and nouns. Conjunctions and prepositions are generally verbs and nouns.

“ Nouns constitute, *in general*, the primitive words in all languages. Verbs are the first-born offspring of nouns. They are nouns employed in a verbal sense ; *at least the greatest quantity of words are of this class ; a few, indeed, appear to have started into being at once as verbs, without any transmigration through a substantive state.*”

If the sum and substance of Horne Tooke's grammatic Diversions were prepared to go into a nutshell, we know not that more could be made of them concerning the parts of speech. But as usually happens, we have not the pure, unqualified doctrine of Horne Tooke from his disciples : it is much diluted

—much reduced below spirit-proof—greatly adulterated (like the philosophy of Hobbes in the Essay of Locke) when it comes to be retailed out to the public. We have marked the admixture by italics. Nouns, it appears, do not absolutely constitute the primitive words, but do so *in general*. Verbs are the first-born offspring of nouns; some, it appears, however, did not come into the world in the ordinary way of generation; they are the offspring of no vocabulary parents whatever; *they started into being at once as verbs*, without any lingering process of parturition, nay, *without any transmigration through a substantive state*.

We have not time at present to admire the poetic beauties of the passage, or the sublime doctrine of transmigration; and it would be unfair to make Horne Tooke responsible for the admixtures and admissions of his disciples. His coquetting *implicitness* respecting the verb as being a noun, yet something more than a noun, has been noticed. If he had not entangled himself with *en* and *th* and *to* as meaning *do*, and as being necessary verbal adjuncts, it would have been easy to understand what (we should have supposed) he must have intended by verbs being something more than nouns. The following are examples of nouns, employed in a verbal sense, without the assistance of any verbal adjunct: Gallant men *eye* the fair—*hand* them a chair, or *seat* them on a sofa—*back* their friends—*face* their enemies—*spur* their horses—*chain* their dogs—*ken*.

*net* their hounds—*bag* their game—*table* their money—*stake* their property—*stack* their hay—*shield* their honour and *pistol* its enemies. A thousand such instances might be collected, (without much trouble,) of *sensible*, *palpable*, *substantive* meanings, and of nouns employed in a verbal sense: and it is probable that most of those words which now appear in the abstract state of mere verbs, were previously names of physical entities.

It is true, that in all such instances as those presented above, there is ellipsis, i. e. something left out: gallant men back their friends and face their foes; i. e. do back their friends, and do face their foes; which is the old mode of the sentence, and that which we still adopt when we wish to speak emphatically: and even then there is much more implied than expressed; there is much verbal ellipsis: but for the same reason that the meaning remains when so much *expression* is left out, the same meaning might have been conveyed if the omitted expression had never existed. Children, (as also foreigners,) when beginning to speak our language, can make themselves understood by merely pronouncing nouns. My child, now playing round my table, has just said, (few parents require to be told how interestingly and persuasively,) "*Pa*, me book." The fond father understood her as readily, and as perfectly, as if she had said, "Please, my papa, will you give to me a book?" or, "Please, my papa, will you take up one of these books from this table, with

one of your hands, and then put it into my hands? for I wish to amuse myself with handling it and looking at it; but I am not tall enough to reach it, else I would not be at the trouble of asking you to hand it to me."

If language had the rude origin which Mr. Horne Tooke always supposes, it is certainly very improbable that such a metaphysical part of speech as the verb, according to our modern notions of it, (i. e. a word which signifies *to be*, *to do* or *suffer*, &c.,) had any distinct, separate, or independent existence. Add to this the fact, that a very great number of verbs (as well as of all the other parts of speech) are, without doubt or controversy, resolvable into nouns.

Now we believe full justice has been done to the statements contained in the *Diversions of Purley*: and now, perhaps, many persons would suppose the subject to be satisfactorily disposed of: all words are resolvable into nouns, and nouns are names, and names are just names; and what more would we be at; for as we cannot proceed *ad infinitum*, we must stop somewhere; and where so proper to stop as with the names of things? This has certainly some show of reason, and is much more satisfactory than putting the world on the back of an elephant, and the elephant on the back of a tortoise, and the tortoise on the back of nothing: it does happen, however, that where the difficulty seems to end with Horne Tooke and others, it only begins with the author: not that he hopes for a *palpable* demonstration

as to the *origin* of language; which is nearly as troublesome to the philologist as the origin of evil; or of matter, is to the theologian (for *origins* are a vexatious race of entities); but he does think that the noun requires to be explained and accounted for as much as any part of speech whatever. Granting that it is resolvable into no other part of speech, what is it to be resolved into? If it be the *offspring* of no vocabulary parent, nor the result of any etymologic *transmigration*, but started into being at once a perfect substantive or full-grown noun; whence, or how did it start into existence? Did it drop down from heaven, or leap out of the mouth of Minerva, as she did out of the brain of Jupiter? In sound, sober earnest.—What is the *reason* of its imposition or application? For if (as Mr. Tooke so often affirms) there be nothing arbitrary or unaccountable about language; if (as he also reiterates) that be a trifling etymology which does not assign the cause or discover the reason for the imposition of any word; it is doing just nothing towards satisfying my philologic curiosity, to resolve all the parts of speech into the noun, and then tell me that a noun is a name. If said noun be in any respect descriptive, (and without this, according to Mr. Tooke, it could be no significant part of speech,) what is its descriptive property—how did it acquire its designative power?

Here also we shall attempt supplementary explanation, that full justice may be done to the claims set up for the noun as being the sole, original, and

pre-existent part of speech. The position of Mr. Tooke, that there is nothing arbitrary about language, we consider perfectly sound: and to assert the contrary is (we conceive) manifestly absurd. Even those unmeaning names, with which we, in these modern times, are so familiar, called *proper nouns*, were originally descriptive of some quality, or expressive of some circumstance; and in the successive re-application of them there is an assignable reason for their imposition; for such names as Robert, John, Alfred, Hunt, Fox, &c., are not employed at random, as we might suppose such new and strange names as those fabricated by Swift; and even, for the employing of these, there is an assignable reason. Perhaps, indeed, nothing more was ever intended, (where the understanding had any share,) by affirming the meanings or applications of words to be arbitrary, than that, where any one word is employed, some other word might have been used for the same purpose; or, that terms are liable, in process of time, to have their signification changed; or, that they may be differently understood, and applied in different ages, and even by different persons of the same age and country: and thus, (as frequently happens in controversy,) one person might affirm, and another might deny, that words are arbitrary signs; and be all the while disputing about nothing.

But there could be no controversy with Mr. Tooke, or with any who adopt his opinions, concerning the present subject of inquiry. He frequently states, as

an essential etymologic principle, that there is a reason for the imposition of every word; i. e. that it has a descriptive significancy, without which, he insists, it has no significancy whatever. In what, then, does the significancy of the noun consist? Or, in other words, whence does the noun itself derive its existence? This question seems to admit of an easy and satisfactory answer in reference to a certain class of words, formed by what is called *onomatopœia*, or imitation of the sound:\* such as, buzz, hum, grunt, croak, cluck, click, clock, clang, clink, clash, whirl, whiz, cuckoo. Many more might be presented; but these are sufficient as a specimen; which is all that is intended here. If such words be considered nouns, here is a satisfactory origin of the noun (and perhaps, after all, of the whole of language); for we have only to suppose the letters that indicate, to the eye, the sounds of which such words consist, contrived, (ar-

\* The author long doubted (probably from his sceptical distrust of received opinions) whether any words had such an origin; and he remembers conversing with an ingenious etymologist and learned lexicographer, who disallowed onomatopœia most peremptorily: the argument employed was, that if it really existed, the different languages would have the same name for the same sound or creature emitting it; which they have not. But the author is now convinced that there is no solid ground for the doubt once entertained by him; and that there is no force in the learned Doctor's argument; for the diversity in the name (say *cuckoo*) for the same sound, in different languages, is easily accounted for in the same manner that other words are greatly diversified in external form among different nations and in different ages.

bitrarily, or conventionally, if you will—for other marks might have been invented and employed,) like the signs in the gamut; (and the one is just as much a philosophic contrivance as the other,) merely for the purpose of literature; i. e. to extend the utility of the *spoken* by rendering it also a *written* language. This is certainly the simplest manner of accounting for the origin of language; and simplicity is in such a case, if not a demonstration, at least a strong argument: and the author is persuaded, that it was his suspicious aversion to received opinions that rendered him, at a former period, so ardent a theorist and strenuous an advocate for the language of *signs* being prior to the language of *sounds*: but sceptic aversion to any opinions, is as unphilosophic as credulous partiality; though the mind usually vibrates from the one extreme to the other before it rests in the centre. The only reasonable doubt seems to be, whether onomatopœia could supply a sufficient stock or capital to begin the business of language with: all that the author will venture to affirm, is, (for he is not confident,) that upon the maturest reflection, aided by considerable inquiry, he thinks it neither impossible nor improbable, that such a small number of words, as seem to originate directly in an imitation of natural sounds, should be available for every verbal purpose; and that, in the slow process of ages, they should have multiplied into the greatest multitude that now form the largest vocabulary with which we are ac-



quainted. But to the question; that, disposing of it, we may pass on to inquiries less doubtful and more useful.

It has been said above, if such words as *hum*, *buzz*, *croak*, &c., be considered nouns, we have, at once, in onomatopœia, a satisfactory origin of the noun as the first part of speech, and that from which all the other parts are derived: but a question still remains, ought such words to be regarded as primarily nouns or verbs? They indicate not any substantive entities, but sounds; and what are sounds but actions or motions, produced by certain impulses given to the atmosphere, whose vibratory movement acts upon the tympanum, or *beats* upon the *drum* of the ear. With hardly any exceptions, (we have not *cuckoo* as a verb,) the imitative words, considered nouns, are also verbs; there are many imitative verbs without any corresponding nouns; and in most of those imitative words, which are both verbs and nouns, the former were evidently prior to the latter: as, *click*, *cluck*, *clack*, before *clock* and the noun *clack*, &c. &c. The fact seems to be, that the last is related to the first, as effect to cause; and that the verbal sense is not only first, in the order of nature, but the proper original signification; whence the substantive meaning is derived by metonymy, or by mental association, as intimated in a former part of the work.

It is somewhat curious that the author, after all his philological scepticism, should come round (so

far as he has any belief—for minds that have been much agitated with doubt seldom settle down into entire confidence) to the ancient faith; for according to the old philologists, verbs were before nouns. It is impossible, indeed, to study either the Greek or Hebrew language, (not to mention any other,) without perceiving, that if many verbs can be resolved into nouns, there are also many which cannot be thus disposed of: and though the doctrine of Horne Tooke seems, at first view, very convincing; the converse of it seems more evident when we prosecute our inquiries: for whatever may have been the origin of language, nouns in general evidently derive their existence either from *attributives* or from verbs; and, unless the testimony of *onomatopœia* be given in favour of the noun, as the pre-existent part of speech, we have no hesitation in affirming, that though many verbs and adjectives be derived from nouns; it is equally true, that all nouns are derived either from *attributives* or verbs; i. e. before they were substantives they were either attributives or verbs.

This whole inquiry is more curious than useful; and is important only as it serves to abate groundless confidence, to remove false theory, and to make us better acquainted with the meaning of words; for it matters very little what we call them, (or what part of speech was first or last,) provided we understand them. It is with considerable pleasure that we now move forward to other inquiries.

---

## THE PARTS OF SPEECH CONSIDERED.

It is wittily said by the author of *Hudibras*, that

“ All a rhetorician’s rules  
But serve him for to name his tools ;”

and it may be truly affirmed, that most of the grammatic terms and distinctions serve no useful purpose whatever : but because they had existed in connexion with Greek and Latin, it was thought necessary or proper to transfer them to the English language.

The different sorts of words, or parts of speech, are said to be *nine*, viz., *Interjection, Article, Conjunction, Preposition, Adverb, Adjective, Pronoun, Noun, and Verb.*

## INTERJECTION.

The *interjection*, or as it is better termed, the *exclamation*, is hardly worthy of notice, being merely an expression of sudden and strong emotion ; for which purpose almost any verb, noun, adjective, &c., may be employed ; for the only natural exclamations are the vowel sounds, as enunciated by a sudden action of the heart, when strongly excited by surprise, joy, grief, &c. Perhaps these natural, unpremeditated expressions of strong emotion, (which are found, with very little diversity, in all languages,) ought to be considered as having assisted in originating lan-

guage; or as having supplied materials for its formation.

#### THE ARTICLE.

This term is so unmeaning or absurd, in its grammatic connexion, that there is some difficulty in imagining how it should have been employed. It is not worth explanation. Grammarians affirm that there are two articles; the one definite, the other indefinite. *The* is said to be definite: it properly ranges with *This* and *That*, called demonstrative pronouns; in connexion with which it will be examined: and therefore, for the present, it is dismissed without further notice.

*A* is said to be the indefinite article, and to become *An* before a word beginning with a vowel: the fact, however, is, that *An* is contracted into *A* before words beginning with a consonant: and at no very remote period of our literature, it remained unchangeably *An* before all words. The reason is obvious: *An*, like *Ein*, Ger.; *Un*, It., Fr., and Sp., is merely † *Ana*, now *One*; i. e. *UN-US*, Lat.; and *EN*, Gr. *A* book is the same as *one* book; *an* ox is the same as *one* ox, &c. &c. How a numeral adjective can be *indefinite* is hard to conceive.

No person at all acquainted with English literature is likely to make any mistake in the application of *an* or *a*; and therefore directions concerning it are wholly unnecessary. For any purpose of necessity or utility, that grammatic designation *article*

can be well spared; and even, when a boy, the author could not help wondering how two such insignificant words as *An* and *The* should have been counted worthy to form one of the favoured *nine* parts of speech (which almost equal in dignity the Nine Muses); but the simple reason is, that learned grammarians had been accustomed to marvellous doctrines concerning the *article*; especially the Greek *article*—next to which the English article ranks in miraculous powers.

N. B. Some write, “A union,” &c.; others, “An union.” The sole reason of contracting *an* into *a* is euphony; and for the same reason that we write, *a youth*, we ought to write or say *a union*, &c. But such petty matters are as little deserving of grammatic notice as bears and monkies are of legislative interference.

#### CONJUNCTION.

This is another entity which merits very little consideration. Both *conjunctive* and *disjunctive* are intelligible terms; and there are words that might be thus designated if it were necessary to apply any designation to them; but *conjunctive conjunction* is an empty tautology; *disjunctive conjunction* is a manifest contradiction. *And* is a *connective* term, and so are other terms, not enumerated with it as conjunctions, entitled to the same appellation. *Either* contracted into *Or*, and *Neither* contracted into *Nor*, are *disconnective*, and so are other words not usually enu-

merated as *disjunctives*; but many words, commonly called *conjunctions*, have as little claim to that designation as to any other which could be applied.

#### PREPOSITION.

This was, in its original application, sufficiently intelligible and significant; for it was equivalent to *prefix*; and simply indicated, that the words which it was employed to designate were frequently prefixed to other words. But as often happens, this was, in process of time, lost sight of; other words besides *prefixes* were classed under the same designation, and then unmeaning doctrine was communicated; such as, "*Prepositions serve to connect words with one another, and to show the relation between them. They are, for the most part, put before nouns and pronouns*"!!!

#### ADVERB.

This is truly, as Horne Tooke terms it, the common *sink* or receptacle for all words that grammarians knew not what to do with, or how to range under the other eight parts of speech. What is an adverb? Lindley Murray shall answer: "*An Adverb is a part of speech joined to a verb, an adjective, and sometimes to another adverb, to express some quality or circumstance respecting it*"!!!

If any species of ignorance be more contemptible than another, it is that which is ostentatious of the appearance of learning, and which affects the forms

of science. Better, surely, have no names than have such as mean nothing: better have no distinctions than have those which are absurd.

All the preceding *five* parts of speech are more worthy of being discarded than explained: the *four* that follow have a better claim to attention.

#### ADJECTIVE OR ATTRIBUTIVE.

The last term has both meaning and utility: and when the grammarian says, “An Adjective is a word added to a substantive to express its quality: as, ‘An *industrious* man;’ ‘A *virtuous* woman;’ ‘A *benevolent* mind;’” there is no violence offered to our understanding: we perceive that the attributive word answers to the description given of it; it indicates some quality, either physical or metaphysical. Thus, in the expressions—*white* paper—*black* ink—*sharp* knife, &c., physical qualities are indicated; but—*candid* temper—*acute* mind—*clear* understanding, &c., may be regarded as indicating metaphysical qualities.

A few remarks may be made concerning the Attributive.

1. The simplicity of the English Attributive. It has no troublesome changes of termination for gender, number, and case, as in Greek and Latin, and in a less degree Italian and French, &c. Such changes may be necessary in Greek and Latin, &c.; but it does not follow that they are excellencies.

2. The English Attributive admits of various

changes for the purpose of indicating diversity of signification: these will be noticed under *Prefixes* and *Affixes*. It may just be observed here, that the three degrees of comparison, affirmed of the *attributive* (or *adjective*), are not unobjectionable; comparative and superlative are intelligible terms; but no useful purpose seems answered by the term *positive degree*. Such an unmeaning distinction, however, is less to be regretted than the irregularities in the comparatives and superlatives of some adjectives most frequently in use. Mr. Tooke justly remarks, that words most frequently used are most corrupted; and even in Murray's Grammar we find the following sensible remark: "In English, as in most languages, there are some words of very *common use* (in which the caprice of custom is apt to get the better of analogy) that are irregular: as 'good, better, best; bad, worse, worst; little, less, least; much or many, more, most; near, nearer, nearest, or next; late, later, latest, or last; old, older or elder, oldest or eldest.'" Children and foreigners beginning to speak our language, uniformly say, good, *gooder*, *goodest*; bad, *bader*, *badest*; little, *littler*, *littlest*, &c., and as uniformly get laughed at as if they were guilty of some risible blunder; which is as unreasonable as it would be to deride a lawyer for opening his mouth about law without first putting on his wig and gown; or to suppose a clergyman could not preach a good sermon unless arrayed in canonicals: such pitiable slaves of mere *custom* are human



beings; so much blind superstition and narrow bigotry have they in their nature; so arrogantly contemptuous are they towards modes (however rational) that differ from their own established forms; so foolishly fond and vain are they of their very faults and failings, their follies and imperfections.

*Anomalies* are faults in language: and shall we consecrate and preserve them as precious relics of classic or Gothic antiquity; or idols, without which grammar would be destitute of a ritual; and which must, therefore, be deified and worshiped for ever? Let us then, at least, exercise some fellow-feeling and becoming candour towards our brethren, who have been guilty of first deifying and then worshipping cats and dogs and various monsters both of human and brutal kinds.

The English language possesses many *comparative excellencies* (and Horne Tooke could not, surely, mean any thing more, when he indulged his sprightly understanding in playful flourishes about the *perfections of language*); but in that grand fault *anomaly*, it is radically corrupt.

Such is the obvious importance or rather necessity of *attributives* to the significancy of language, that the author long considered them the first or pre-existent species of words, whence all the others derived their existence: and certain it is, (whatever Horne Tooke may have said to the contrary,) that language could not advance many steps without employing adjectives: and, perhaps, after all, a few

terms of this description to indicate the more obvious and striking qualities of objects, constituted if not the whole, at least part, of the original invention of language; for, as Mr. Horne Tooke justly remarks, it is the necessary condition of man to have few different *ideas* (which are quite distinct from the infinite variety of mental movement produced by *ideas* or inward images, i. e. pictures of external objects); and for indicating these ideas a very small number of words would be, in the first instance, sufficient; at least in as far as *necessity* only for verbal inter-communication was concerned. It deserves also to be remarked, that if many adjectives evidently originate in verbs and substantives, there are many verbs and substantives that as evidently originate in adjectives: and there are many instances in which it would be as difficult or impossible to trace the one, as it would be to trace the other, to any pre-existent state or character. It must be confessed, however, that though not free from difficulty, yet according to the preponderance of evidence, adjectives must be considered as originating in nouns or verbs: i. e. they are either nouns or verbs employed attributively. The adjectives derived from verbs are obviously the same as *participles*; which will be considered presently: and in the same manner that verbs become participles, are nouns formed into adjectives. Take a single instance that happens to occur: MEL, MELI, honey; whence MELLE-US, (of honey, like honey,) corrupted into *Mellow*, *Yellow*; MELLITUS, con-

tracted into *MITIS* ; whence *MITIGAT-US*, corrupted into *Meek*, &c. &c. Thus, many adjectives (and thence again nouns, verbs, &c.) are formed out of one substantive : but this subject will recur again under *Affixes* ; and, therefore, it is unnecessary to detain the reader longer with *attributives* in this place.

#### OF PRONOUNS.

“ A PRONOUN [we are told] is a word used instead of a noun, to avoid the too frequent repetition of the same word.” The name implies as much (*PRO for NOMEN, noun*) ; and grammarians have thus asserted, perhaps, ever since grammarians existed ; but it is one proof among a thousand other proofs how unwilling they have been to trouble their understandings in the way of their profession ; for both the *designation* and the *definition* are destitute of foundation. Something like proof seems deducible from what is termed the third personal pronoun : as, “ The man is happy ; *he* is benevolent ; *he* is useful.” But can we be favoured with one proof or illustration drawn from any other pronoun ? Show a single successful experiment with *I, We, Thou, You, &c.* Instead of what *nouns* are these *pronouns* used to avoid the too frequent repetition of the same word ? Here is a short and easy method of terminating all controversy.

The noun to which the *pronoun* belongs can be omitted and is often omitted ; just as sentences may

be rendered elliptic in many other respects and their meaning be preserved : but it does not follow, that the words denominated Pronouns stand instead of Nouns ; any more than it can be truly said that those words which remain in any elliptic or abridged sentence stand instead of the words omitted. We can frequently use *he, she, it, they*, alone ; i. e. without expressing the nouns to which they respectively belong : just as we can frequently use such words as, *This, That, These, Those, Former, Latter, First, Last, Above, Foresaid, &c.*, (which have all, in fact, as much claim to the title of Pronoun, as those words on which it has been conferred,) without expressing the nouns to which they *direct attention* ; but if we wish to be emphatic or definite, (as in legal writings for example,) we express the noun ; and do not trust it to be understood. Take the following illustration : The grammarians have delivered many absurd opinions : they aforesaid (or the said—or—these) grammarians affirm, that such words as, *he, she, it, &c.*, are Pronouns, i. e. that they are used instead of nouns ; but I, the author of this work, do testify of my own knowledge that the words referred to, are not truly Pronouns, but (if they must have a name) *Connouns* ; for they and nouns are mutually related, not as principal and substitute or president and *vice-president*, but as fellow-servants ; and if one of them be occasionally absent so as to occasion the work of both to be performed by the other ; yet the one thus enjoying leave of absence must instantly

re-appear whenever called for to secure greater definiteness.

The fumbling phraseology of the grammarians, proves that they were groping in the dark ; yet some of their terms, such as, *Definitive*, *Demonstrative*, &c., indicate that they were not far from the truth : only what have been termed personal pronouns, are as truly *demonstrative* as those words are to which the term is applied. Their sole use is to demonstrate, i. e. to direct attention to some object or noun, which is always either expressed or understood ; and, for the same reason that the *noun* is not always expressed but often understood, so is the *Common* also frequently omitted in elliptic modes of expression. If we say in Latin, *Hic homo*, it is equivalent to *Ecce homo* ; in English, behold man ; yon man ; that man ; this man ; the man, &c. : and if the *man* be actually in sight, (and those words called pronouns suppose the object in view either of the eye or of the mind ; or rather direct the view to an object,) *Ecce homo* or *Hic homo*, *yon man*, &c., can be dispensed with ; as the business of directing attention to him can be accomplished by pointing with a finger or by some other visible sign.

Thus, what are called personal pronouns, relative pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, definite article, and some other words not classed under any of these designations, all serve one and the same purpose, i. e. they point to some object or some noun ; and, therefore, they cannot stand in its stead. If it were

necessary to give such words a particular designation, they might be designated *Demonstrative Con- nouns*, or simply *Demonstratives*; but such unnecessary terms are more conducive to ignorance than to knowledge: and the words in question are properly verbs in what is called the imperative mood: the reader is, therefore, referred to the Dictionary, where each of them is treated of in its proper place. In the mean time they shall be disposed of as briefly as possible.

#### THE DERIVATION OF WHAT ARE TERMED ENGLISH PRONOUNS.

THE most of these are obviously adopted from the Latin, into which they were as evidently adopted from the Greek: thus, *Ego*, was changed into *Eck*, *Ick*, *Ik*, and at last remains with us *I*; and with our neighbours, *Ich*, Ger., *Io*, It., *Je*, Fr., *Yo*, Sp.: we have *ME* unchanged: *TU* is changed into *Thou*, *Du*, Ger.; the Latin form remains without any change in It. Fr. Sp.: *Nos*, (and Sp.,) changed into *Noi*, It., *Nous*, Fr., whence *We*, and Ger. *Wir*: *Us*, is manifestly a contraction of *Nous*, by omitting the two first letters: *Vos*, (and Sp.,) changed into *Voi*, It., *Vous*, Fr., pronounced *Voo*; whence, *You* and *Ye*, *Euch*, Ger.

Those of the third person have caused more doubt and trouble; but after much inquiry and reflection, the following is considered their derivation:

*Is*, *Ea*, *Id*, corrupted into *He*, *She*, *It*. The

Saxon is He, Heo, Hit; or what is manifestly *another of the same*, though called by the Saxon grammarians the Article or Definitive, Se, Seo, Thæt; and the plural is Hi (Ii, Lat.) or Tha; whence our They.

Concerning the insertion of H and S, &c., see Etymologic Preliminaries. It could be shown, it is believed, that all the different forms of the German, Swedish, Danish, and Dutch pronouns, were, in like manner, corrupted from the Latin.

QUI, (and Fr.,) Chi, It., changed into Who (also into Why, How, &c.); QUIS, QUID, Which; QUOD, What.

This and That, (with their plural These and Those,) contracted into The, called definite article; Diese, Dass, Das, &c. Ger.; Dat, Die, De, Te, &c. Dutch; Det, Dette, &c. Swed., &c.; seem like Desso, It., corrup. of ISTA, ISTA, ISTUD; unless *Ditto* be a more probable etymon.

#### THE WORDS COMMONLY CALLED PRONOUNS CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO NUMBER, GENDER, AND CASE.

##### NUMBER.

THERE is, doubtless, some advantage in diversity of termination for the purpose of indicating *singleness* and *plurality*; yet that this advantage is much less than grammarians suppose, is evident from the little

use made of *numeral distinction* in *English Pronouns*. Without any loss of meaning, but with much grammatic convenience, we have no numeral diversity in our relatives—Who, Which, What, That, and in what is called our Definite Article The.

What numeral distinctions can appear more necessary than *Thou* and *You*? Yet if *Thou* had not found protection among the Quakers, and refuge in prayer, it would have wholly perished; and that royal pronoun *We*, threatens to supersede *I*; for established usage is, already, almost as shy of it as of thou.

#### GENDER.

Any sign of Gender is as little necessary as of Number: hence, except in the third person singular, no such sign exists. Lindley Murray (whose grammatic celebrity entitles him to some preference as an authority) indeed, tells us, “The persons speaking and spoken to, being at the same time the subjects of the discourse, are supposed to be present; from which and *other circumstances*, their sex is commonly known and needs not to be marked by a distinction of gender in the pronouns: but the third person or thing spoken of being absent, and in many respects unknown, it is *necessary that it should be marked by a distinction of gender*.” Well then, what becomes of this *necessity* in the third person plural, which contains no sign of distinction in gender? The *grammarian* could not but perceive his statement to



be too hazardous, unless accompanied by some saving clause ; and, therefore, in the legitimate manner of a sophist, he subjoins, “ *at least, when some particular person or thing is spoken of, that ought to be more distinctly marked : accordingly, the pronoun singular of the third person has the three genders, he, she, it*” !!!

The reader would be as little edified as gratified by comments on such doctrines. There is a useless but embarrassing distinction attempted, if not already effected, between Who and Which ; as if the former belonged exclusively to persons, and the latter to things and animals devoid of reason, such as turkeys and infants : if this additional fetter of senseless grammar be imposed upon free-born Englishmen, it will be their own fault ; for up to a very recent period, there is the sanction of the best usage for scornful disregard of such petty distinctions ; which serve no purpose except to render English composition difficult.

#### CASE.

We have seen how little the distinctions of Number and Gender are necessary : but the distinctions of Case (except what is called the Genitive) are worse than useless ; for they cause much embarrassment : were it not for these and a few other grammatical nuisances, the English language would be the simplest, easiest, and most manageable ever constructed.

The truth is, we have varieties of termination

called *cases* for no reason in the world save that they existed in Greek and Latin ; but though such varieties of termination might be necessary or useful in these languages, it does not follow that they are either necessary or useful in English ; which accomplishes by *position* the same purpose which the former effected by *case* : hence, (fortunately,) we have no *accusative case* of nouns ; which retain the same unchanged form whether *nominatives*, or *objectives*. If every purpose of speech be accomplished without change of termination in nouns, what can render such change necessary or useful in pronouns ? If This, That, These, Those, Which, What, It, The, &c., be fully competent to the purpose for which they are employed without any change, what could possibly incapacitate the other words of the same class for performing their office, if they appeared only in a single form ? But it is useless to reason on the subject. We have *Me, Thee, Him, Whom*, &c. ; *merely* because the monkish grammatists found *Me, Te, Eum, Quem*, &c., in the Latin language. Nor is it surprising that, in borrowing so much from it, they should have adopted more than was necessary ; but why should we deify and worship or consecrate and preserve their blunders ? Let the grammatists cogitate an apophthegm of their great lexicographer : *What reason did not dictate, reason can never explain.* Let them humbly content themselves with saying this or that unreasonable part of grammar *is*,

because it *was* ; and because it was and is, therefore it shall be for ever.

But having much affection for the English language ; and contemplating the long duration and wide prevalence that seem to await it, we have some desire that it should descend to future times as free from imperfection as possible : and the abuses we complain of might be easily removed without the least danger or inconvenience.

If what are termed the pronouns were brought to the simple state in which the nouns of the English language exist, they would appear thus : I, I's ; Thou, Thou's ; He, He's ; She, She's ; It, It's ; We, We's ; You, You's ; They, They's ; Who, Who's.

This is all that is necessary in the way of personal and relative *Connoun* : and what a contrast of simplicity to the jumble of anomaly which at present enjoys the patronage of established usage ! Many, indeed, will deem it a very naked simplicity : and the disciples of custom, who always judge more by habit than by reflection, will, probably, find in it some mirthful amusement ; for which it is hoped they will be duly grateful. We are not sanguine in our expectation that such simplicity will be either generally relished or adopted ; but if the objective case be given up, we care not about the rest ; for it is that which next to the verb, causes the chief difficulty of English grammar. Such anomalies as My, Mine ; Thy,

Thine ; Your, Your's ; Her, Her's ; Their, Their's ; are soon mastered ; but the etiquette of placing I and Me ; Thou and Thee ; He and Him ; She and Her ; They and Them ; Who and Whom ; is a matter of constant recurrence ; and in which the most expert grammarians are apt to blunder. If, however, one form were adhered to, (let it be either I or Me ; He or Him ; They or Them ; She or Her ; which is wholly indifferent,) such blundering could not happen : and that one of these forms might be dispensed with is evident ; for when *ungrammatical* persons say, *I saw he ; he saw I ; you saw they ; or, me saw him ; him saw me, &c. ;* though the mode of expression may seem ludicrous to grammatic people, there is nothing wrong as to *meaning*—that is conveyed as distinctly by the peasant's bad grammar as by the good grammar of Lindley Murray : and when any other standard of correctness than significance is erected under the name of grammar, it is to be regarded as a mere ceremonial or fantastic etiquette imposed on the grammatic multitude ; who are not to enjoy the blessing of liberty in expressing their thoughts ; but are always to be in the bondage of a most arbitrary censorship. Though English grammar be very simple, what *littérateur* is there, however accomplished, who is not frequently guilty of some grammatic offence ? Hence *the gentlemen of the press* usually mix up their controversies with grammatic recriminations : and it is very amusing to see William Cobbett turn round on his literary pur-

suers, and, by the force of his native prowess, aided by grammatic discipline, put to flight Leigh Hunt, Dr. Stoddart, and all his grammatic foes ; then sit in judgment on the *Collective Wisdom* of the Nation, and convict all the learning and talents thereof, as well as Mr. Canning and all his Majesty's ministers, of bad grammar.

If we were in a grave mood we should perhaps deplore that, in addition to all the other causes of personal and factious hostility which exist in this imperfect world, there should be a senseless, mischief-making kind of grammar to *set men together by the ears* ; which, moreover, causes much embarrassment in writing and speaking our thoughts (and the business is sufficiently difficult of itself without any unnecessary impediment or incumbrance) ; whilst it creates and perpetuates a vain, petty, contemptuous, carping, kind of criticism. But almost any thing is better than stagnation ; and in consequence of the amusement just received from the subject, we are in some danger of feeling a wicked pleasure in reflecting that there is not much chance of grammatic reform : for though the measure be quite practicable, who, that have sufficient influence, will come forward and contribute their example ? This is all that is wanted : and however strange some parts of *analogy* might seem, when first presented, after a long absence, and after we had been all our lifetime used to *anomalies* ; in the course of a few weeks, our mouths, our eyes, our ears and imaginations would

be as much enamoured of them as of a French phrase, or fashion just imported, and which is in vogue at the West-end of the Town: soon would the old discarded anomalies seem as ugly and vulgar as the degraded fashions and phrases which have taken refuge among the *mobility*.

Let the influential personages of the literary world, particularly the *corps diplomatique* of reviewers (as powerful in the modern republic of letters as lawyers in the state), and the writers in all the periodicals, and all the gentlemen of the press, discard accusative cases of pronouns. In making an experiment upon established usage, they have an opportunity of trying their strength and of proving their power. If they will not hazard a little innovation for the sake of simplicity and utility, let us give arbitrary grammar the usual valediction—*esto perpetua*. The author will at least possess the satisfaction of having abated its pretensions.

We object to all unnecessary intricacies in language; but we have no objection to any useful contrivance: hence what is called the *genitive* case has been exhibited in connexion with the *connouns*; because it is somewhat useful and strictly agreeable to analogy; for nouns in general admit of such a change of termination to denote possession, connexion, or relation, and to avoid a longer mode of expression: as, “Mr. Tooke’s work,” for, the work of Mr. Tooke; “Locke’s Essay,” for the Essay of Locke. So, if either of these authors has been spoken of, and is

therefore supposed to be in view, we might say, he's work; he's Essay. His, Its, Whose, should evidently, for the sake of analogy, be He's, It's, Who's: and for the same reason, You's is preferable to You; They's to Their, &c.

What, then, is this termination called possessive or genitive? It is a contraction of *is*, also anciently *es*; for what is now put *man's*, was formerly *manis*, or *manes*; and every one is familiar with the use of what is called the *apostrophic* sign, i. e. the comma put to indicate the omission of some letter or letters. If, then, 's be a contraction of *is* or *es*, what is *is*? It is the sign of the genitive singular, third declension of Latin nouns; which was adopted by the Saxon writers to answer the same purpose in the native language which they were forming: and there can be no doubt that said *is* was originally a separate word answering in meaning or use to *of* with us: which *of*, as well as the termination *is*, is a contraction or fragment of some compound word. *Man's* is the same in English as *Hominis* in Latin: Man's condition is the same in significancy as, the condition of man; or the human condition. In the last instance, *human* is an adjective formed upon *Homo*, anciently *HUMO*, by adding *an*; which *an* serves the same purpose as the termination *is*, or our *of*; i. e. it denotes connexion or relation. Our word *Man*, as noticed in another place, is a contraction of *Human*, and elliptical for *human being*: hence the reason why the following expressions are all equivalent: *Conditio*

hominis, humana conditio; Man's condition, the condition of man, the human condition.

There is little or nothing gained by contracting *Manis* or *Manes*; *Birdis* or *Birdes*, into Man's, Bird's, &c. The reason of its adoption was, evidently, to distinguish what is called the genitive or possessive from the plural termination; for they were both *es* or *is*. When, therefore, *Birdis*, for example, was contracted into Birds plural, the possessive was put Bird's; and this distinction has sufficient utility (at least to the eye, for it is useless in reference to the ear) to warrant its retention.

It has been observed that the plural was formerly the same as the possessive or genitive termination. The same is the case in the Latin: the terminations *æ*, *i*, *is*, are signs of the genitive singular and nominative plural: as *MUSÆ*, means both of a song and songs; *DOMINI*, of a lord and lords; *SERMONIS*, of a speech and speeches; only the plural, in the third declension, is generally *es*: as, *SERMONES*, &c.; but, originally, there was no difference between it and the genitive singular. This fact might have enlightened the grammarians concerning the termination in question. See Noun and Affixes.

We shall dismiss the *Commons*, commonly called *Pronouns*, with a brief explication of their diversified forms as they now exist. *I*, as has been shown, is a corruption of *Ego*; *ME* is the Latin accusative; *Thou* is a corruption of *Tu*; *Thee* of *Te*; *We* is a



corruption of *Nos*, from the French *Nous*; as also *Us*, by retaining the last instead of the first letters; *You* and *Ye* of *Vous*, (Fr. pronounced *Voo*,) i. e. *Vos*: *He*, *She*, *It*, are *Is*, *EA*, *ID*: *They*, we at first thought the Saxon *Hi*, i. e. *Ii*; but we now consider it the same as *Tha* (Saxon), *De* (Dutch and Swed.), *Die* (Ger.), and as *The*, *This*, *That*, *These*, *Those*; all which varied forms are, probably, like *Desso* (It.), resolvable into *ISTE*, *ISTA*, *ISTUD*, taken either as singular or plural: *Him* is a cor. of *EUM*; and changed into *Them* for the plur.; for in Saxon, *Him* is for both numbers: *Her* is, in Saxon, *Hire*, and given as gen. and dat. of *Heo*, (now *She*,) i. e. *EA*; it was originally the possessive: hence, *her* is with us both genitive and accusative.

.. The Saxon has *Him* for dat. and *Hine* for accus.; the Ger. has *Ihm* and *Ihn*; the Swedish has *Han* nom. he, and *Hanom*, accus. him; *De* they, and *Dem* them: we have some doubt whether the termination *m* be not the preposition *Om*, *Am*, &c., (for it is variously spelled,) affixed to the pronoun; but we rather think it is the accusative singular of the Latin.

Who, Which, What, are *QUI*, *QUIS*, *QUID*, *QUOD*; Whom is *QUEM*; My is *MEUS*; Thy, *TUUS*; Mine and thine are cor. of *Myen*, *Thyen*, *en* being a usual adjective affix; as *golden* from *gold*. Our is a cor. of *Notre* (Fr.), i. e. *NOSTER*; Your of *Votre*, i. e. *VESTER*: whence, by analogy, *Their* (for *Theyer*), *Her*, &c. We have other unnecessary cases, or

duplicate adjective signs : as, *Her's, Our's, Your's, Their's*; which are just as ignorantly put, as, *Ouren, Youren, Hisen, Theiren*, &c., by the illiterate.

*Self*, used for the purpose of emphasis, is *SE-ILLE*; as, *Myself, Thysself, Yourselves, Ourselves* : *Hissself, Theirselves*, have been superseded by very ludicrous grammatic blunders; for *Himself, Themselves*, are as incorrect as *Theeself, Usselves*, &c.

---

#### THE NOUN OR SUBSTANTIVE.

HERE the *name* may be first considered. As usual the grammarians have preferred the least intelligible and appropriate term that could well be found; and some very amusing reasons have been assigned for the propriety of *substantive*. The grammarians of the learned languages have, with some show of reason, employed the terms Noun Substantive and Noun Adjective; i. e. a name that can stand by itself without any assistance; and a name that requires to be added to or rested upon another. There is, as usual, in these terms, a good deal of false theory, concerning which we cannot stop to inquire at present. But though the grammarians of the learned languages have *noun substantive* and *noun adjective*, why should their vernacular imitators, after treating *noun* and *substantive* as synonymous, prefer the latter to the former? Probably the sole reason was, that the one seemed a more respectable looking

word than the other. But substantive, besides being apt to suggest the notion of *substance*, is objectionable for other reasons, as being connected with false theory. Noun, (i. e. NOMEN, ONOMA,) *name*, is perhaps as intelligible and appropriate a term as can be found for the purpose. It is desirable that names or designations should at least possess the negative merit of not being false guides; but in general we must proceed much further in our inquiries than they can conduct us. What, then, is that which we agree to call *noun*? How shall we define it? —*Hoc opus! There is nothing so important, in a philosophic view, as correct definition; but, at the same time, there is nothing so difficult:* a position which existed long before the author of this work; but one which seems little considered—if we may judge by the rash and confident manner in which intellectual crudities and empty verborosities are given for adequate and accurate definitions. “A noun,” says the grammarist, “is the name of any thing that exists, or of which we have any notion:” and, without stopping to look round for either *notion* or *existence* of explanation, he proceeds to other doctrines equally edifying to grammatic believers.

This truly grammatic definition was one of the first *things* that gave the author, when yet a credulous youth, some *notion* of grammatic absurdity. If, he reasoned, a noun be the name of any thing which exists; how can *Nothing*, or any one of those words which denote *non-existence*, be a noun? And if the

expression, *any thing of which we have any notion*, mean more than *any thing which exists*, it means too much to be a correct definition; for all words that have any signification, are names of *things* (either physical or metaphysical) of which we have a notion: and if it be affirmed that *thing* denotes a real *existent*, in distinction from attribute, action, relation, &c., then, also, the definition is not only incorrect, but manifestly false; for many words are called nouns which denote no such absolute entity: and the contrary supposition is not merely a philologic error, but a cause of much metaphysical absurdity, which men give and receive as sound ratiocination.

Well, perhaps exclaims the impatient reader, (and he cannot be more impatient of the subject than the author,) give us your own definition! We have not yet promised one; for though nothing, in a philosophic view, is more important than correct definition, nothing is more difficult; and nothing is more absurd and mischievous in reasoning, than incorrectness of this kind; for then our understandings are entrusted, not merely to blind, but to false or treacherous, guides. We must never forget that *noun* is one of those artificial entities which are as apt to cause perplexity as to be of any utility. We consider that which is in question to be necessary only as a fulcrum on which to rest our lever in demolishing grammatic absurdity: and we define a *noun* to be a grammatic designation, given not only

to all those words which are the names of sensible objects; as, Man, Horse, Bird, Tree, Stone, Lake, River, City, &c.; but also to all those words which can be employed in a sentence as if they were names of such objects as, Hunger, Reason, Virtue, Vice, Nothing, Non-existence, &c. Any of the latter words can be employed exactly as the former, in connexion with other words, to form a sentence: as, Man is a rational animal; Reason is very different from imagination; Non-existence is preferable to eternal torture. Thus any word which can be put as the agent or subject, the nominative or object of a verb, is entitled to the grammatic designation of noun: and we know not of any other definition which is admissible as correct.

All words thus designated may be distinguished into Nouns physical and Nouns metaphysical: many of the latter are not names of entities, but of nonentities: such as, Fate, Luck, Chance, &c.: few of these, comparatively, denote absolute existents any way analogous to physical objects: they, for the most part, merely indicate qualities, motions, relations, thoughts, feelings, &c. &c. Many even of those nouns which may be considered physical, are not properly names of things or absolute existents, but of motions: as, Current, Stream, Storm, Wind, Wave, Billow, Breath, Sound, &c. &c.

This *unsubstantial* nature of what are called *substantives*, which “give to airy nothings a local habitation and a name,” is certainly a great *convenience*

in language ; i. e. to enable men to talk without meaning, and “ say an infinite deal about nothing ” : it is wonderfully subservient to effective rhetoric, and enchanting poesy, and deceitful sophistry ; but it is very unfavourable to sound reasoning and true philosophy : it must, therefore, be set down as one of the radical imperfections of language : and in guarding against the deception of words, it is particularly necessary to examine their import. Many of them mean nothing : many are of uncertain import ; many being imbued with error and prejudice, serve only to impose on the understanding.

Many Nouns admit of (i. e. we may choose to give to them) a threefold distinction ; as being Generic, Specific, *Individualic* ; or, Universal, General, Particular : the first relate to Genus ; the second to Species ; the third to Individual : as, Man, Italian, Dante ; Man, Englishman, Milton : Horse, Racer, Eclipse ; Dog, Bull-dog, Billy : Bird, Parrot, Polly : Heavenly bodies, Planets, Sun, or Moon, or Venus, &c. Many Nouns admit only of a twofold distinction : River ; the Danube or the Thames, &c. Rivulet is merely a diminutive of River, and the one is as truly generic as the other : Lake ; Lake Onega or Maggiore, &c. : Pond is as much generic as Lake : Sea ; the Mediterranean or Baltic, &c. : Vice ; Drunkenness, Lying, &c. : Virtue ; Sobriety, Chastity, Honesty, &c. In all such instances, the one may be called *generic*, the other *individualic*. River is the generic ; Thames is the individualic term :

and thus of Virtue and Chastity, &c.; Vice and Falsehood, &c.

The above statement is intended to supersede the following lucubration of grammar-makers: "Substantives," say they, "are either *Proper or Common*. Proper Substantives are the names appropriated to individuals: as, George, London, Thames. Common names or substantives, *stand for kinds containing many sorts, or for sorts containing many individuals under them*; as animal, man, tree, &c."!!

The reader will perceive that a certain description of Individualic Nouns may be termed *arbitrary*; for a particular man may be called, George, James, Thomas, &c.; a particular horse may be called Eclipse, Joekey, &c.; a particular heavenly body may be called Venus, Mars, Jupiter, &c., according to the will or fancy of the person or persons imposing the name. This obvious fact is, no doubt, the cause of the assertions so often made concerning language, as being arbitrary and conventional. It will be found, however, upon due inquiry, that comparatively few of those nouns which are considered as merely *proper names*, (to use the common term,) are thus arbitrary designations; and though many of them have become, in the course of time, mere appellations, wholly devoid of significancy, (for there is now as little meaning in Robert, John, Smith, Taylor, &c., as in Brobdignag—and the one would do as well as the other for a mere designation,) yet they were originally *descriptive* so far as they went; i. e. of some

striking circumstance or obvious peculiarity. The importance of etymology consists in ascertaining the descriptive import of words; which is not indeed of any great utility as to physical nouns; for they answer the purpose of designation, even if their significancy be not perceived. The names London, Paris, Thames, Rhone, Sun, Moon, like Dante, Milton, &c., answer the purpose of designation completely, however ignorant we may be of their etymology; and it might be even argued (as it has been argued) with some show of reason, that the more of such ignorance which exists the better, as the etymologic meaning might only tend to deceive, by its erroneous representation; as, for example, in the designation Pacific Ocean. The case is very different, however, as to metaphysical nouns (and all metaphysical words, i. e. words employed for metaphysical purposes); for every thing depends upon ascertaining their significancy, or their insignificancy; i. e. whether they mean any thing or nothing; and whether their meaning present natural or chimerical ideas to the imagination, and true or false notions to the understanding. If metaphysical nouns be taken as if they were mere designations, like what are called proper names, without any regard to the reason of their imposition, the consequence must be error and deception; and this (as already intimated) is one of the principal causes of verbal imposture and metaphysical absurdity, or false and deceitful philosophy: to which, the only effectual counteraction that can



be opposed, is sound etymology; though it will never, perhaps, accomplish all that Horne Tooke predicted.

It will be perceived that all nouns, which are in any respect descriptive, (unless, as before intimated, words imitating sounds be considered nouns,) must have been, previously, either attributives or verbs; i. e. there must have been a reason for their imposition before they were employed as nouns.

It will be found also, on due inquiry, that Generic are, in general, prior to Specific, and Specific prior to Individualic terms.

#### CASE, GENDER, AND NUMBER CONSIDERED, IN REFERENCE TO NOUNS.

##### CASE.

THE grammatists seem, in general, half ashamed of the poverty of our language in this particular; and they have endeavoured, with the best intentions in the world, to enrich it with imaginary cases: and they aver it to have, at the very least, three cases, viz. the *nominative*, *possessive*, and the *objective*. Lindley Murray, indeed, informs us, that he was long harassed with doubts before he arrived at true faith on this important article of his grammatic creed. "The author of this work," he tells us, "long doubted the propriety of assigning to English substantives an objective case: *but a renewed, critical*

*examination of the subject* ; an examination to which he was prompted by the extensive and increasing demand for the grammar, *has produced, in his mind, a full persuasion, that the nouns of our language are entitled to this comprehensive objective case* !!!

But after all the doubts, and full persuasions, and earnest desires, and strenuous endeavours of grammarians, our language is simpler than even its Saxon and Gothic ancestors ; for English nouns have no change of termination, commonly called *case* ; save that which is called *possessive* alias *genitive* : as Man's for *of man*, Woman's for *of woman*, &c. ; and many English nouns do not admit even of this change : yet this defect of *cases* occasions no loss of significancy and no inconvenience.

The affix *'s* has been already explained ; and, therefore, we dismiss the *case* of English nouns as quite hopeless, by merely remarking, that according to present usage, the *s* is sometimes omitted out of compliment to the eyes and ears of the public : as, " On eagles' wings ; " " The drapers' company ; " " For goodness' sake ; " " For righteousness' sake : " Not eagles's wings ; drapers's company ; for righteousness's sake ; for goodness's sake. It may be intimated, however, that the ears will be yet more conciliated by saying, in such cases, wings of eagles ; the company of drapers ; for the sake of righteousness ; for the sake of goodness.

## GENDER.

The reader must be informed that gender means *kind*, and that there are three kinds of nouns, viz., such as denote males, or he-animals; such as denote females, or she-animals; and such as denote neither the one nor the other, having no sexual distinction whatever: moreover, he must be informed, that in this instance the English language is richer than several of its neighbours; for some of them have both masculine and feminine gender, i. e. male and female kinds of nouns, but no neuter kind. It seems also, very necessary to inform him, that there are metaphoric males and females; figurative ladies and gentlemen. "Figuratively in the English tongue," we are told, "we commonly give the masculine gender to nouns which are conspicuous for the attributes of imparting or communicating, and which are, by nature, strong and efficacious. Those again are made feminine, which are conspicuous for the attributes of *containing or bringing forth*; or which are *peculiarly beautiful or amiable*. Upon these principles, the sun is said to be masculine; and the moon, being the receptacle of the sun's light, to be feminine. The earth is, generally, feminine. A ship, a country, a city, &c., are likewise made feminine, being receivers or containers. Time is always masculine, on account of its mighty efficacy. Virtue is feminine from its beauty, [should it not be *her*?]

and its being the object of *love*. Fortune and the church are generally put in the feminine gender"!!!

Behold the sublime of metaphoric gender, and sexual distinction, and grammatic sentimentality! The writer of such a lovely piece of theory (we fancy that famous philosopher, James Harris, did it into English) must have finished it as triumphantly as if he had wooed and married all the Nine Muses at once. What chaste allusions to holy matrimony! What delicate touches on masculine efficacy and communicativeness; feminine receptiveness and fruitfulness, charms, and graces! What masculine heart can be so insensible to female attractions as not to fall in love with that perfect Venus, Virtue! Or, is it wonderful, that the sun and moon should be husband and wife, though living so far apart! There is, indeed, something of the whimsical in metaphoric gender and matrimony; for with our old, rude ancestors, the Saxons, the moon was not the wife, but the husband of the sun; and some etymologists of the Northern Origin, derive the proper name *Moon* from the common name *Man*!

It must be matter of self-gratulation to the sentimental French, that they are not driven to the necessity of figurative genders; as all their nouns are either masculine or feminine; so that they can appear to talk about ladies and gentlemen when speaking of battles and spectacles, plays and operas, metaphysical entities and nonentities.

The business of gender is a very serious affair in

Greek, Latin, and even in Italian, French, &c. ; but nothing can be more simple in English ; for, except in a few instances, it is left, as it should be, to the meaning of words as indicative of the natures of objects, and not distinguished by different sets of terminations ; which are more troublesome than they are worth. The grammarians, indeed, assert, “ Nouns, with variable terminations, contribute to conciseness and perspicuity of expression. We have only a sufficient number of them to make us feel our want ; for when we say of a woman, she is a philosopher, an astronomer, a builder, a weaver, we perceive an impropriety in the termination which we cannot avoid ; but we can say, that she is a botanist, a student, a witness, a scholar, an orphan, a companion, because these terminations have not annexed to them the notion of sex.”

If all these assertions were admitted, still the advantage of variable terminations might be denied ; for it could be proved, that they produce a preponderance of inconvenience : but though they contribute to conciseness and perspicuity in such languages as Greek and Latin, in which the personal pronouns are seldom expressed ; they are not necessary to perspicuity, and would contribute very little to conciseness in English composition : and if the question be fairly tried by a sufficient number of instances, the English will be found equal to any language (however incumbered with inflection) in conciseness and perspicuity.

What impropriety is there in saying of a female, that she is an astronomer, philosopher, &c., any more than in saying, she is a botanist, scholar, &c.? The truth is, that having, very unnecessarily, adopted a number of foreign distinctions of gender, we are apt to fancy that they are very necessary, or would be extremely desirable to all nouns; just as a little indulgence is apt to produce a restless longing after useless or hurtful luxuries: so that, instead of saying, "We have only a sufficient number of variable terminations to make us feel our want"; we ought rather to say, we have a sufficient number of them to produce false notions and fantastic desires; and it would be much wiser to discard some we have than long for more. Such titles as Countess, Duchess, Empress, Princess, &c., may remain; but what utility is there in Actress, Arbitress, Benefactress, Conductress, Huntress, Patroness, Poetess, Protectress, Tutorress, Votaress? Even the eyes and ears (by which grammarians are wont to judge) are surely better pleased with the expressions, She is a clever actor, she is the arbiter; benefactor, conductor, patron, poet, protector, &c., than she is a clever actress, she is the arbitress, &c.

As to perspicuity, such feminine terminations contribute nothing, because the *connoun* She, which accompanies the noun, indicates the feminine gender as definitely as it is possible for any termination to indicate the same thing: and as to conciseness; that, in most cases, is better effected by one termination

than by several. Thus, to say, Attend, ye actors, is more concise than, Attend, ye actors and actresses; Ye adulterers, is more concise than Ye adulterers and adulteresses, &c.

We have much reason for congratulation concerning gender in reference to English nouns; for they have fortunately escaped the troublesome incumbrance of variable termination; and however the grammarians may lament their rude simplicity, there is not much danger that they will ever be changed into the likeness of Greek and Latin substantives.

#### NUMBER.

The only change of termination in English nouns, besides the affix 's to denote *of*, is that which is employed to indicate the *plural*; or, that *more than one is meant*. The plural affix has been already explained, in treating of Pronouns. There can be little doubt that the two terminations of singular and plural import have some utility; yet, that it is much less than we are apt to imagine, is abundantly evident from the number of nouns which we have with only one termination, without experiencing any inconvenience: as, Sheep, Deer, Swine, &c. In these cases, if it be intended to indicate the singular number, or that *one* is meant, the purpose is fully accomplished by prefixing *a*; which, as already shown, is a contraction of *an*, i. e. ‡ *ane*, i. e. *one*. In such a connexion, what is called (very absurdly) the indefinite article answers a useful purpose; whereas, in ninety-nine

applications out of a hundred, it is wholly useless; only, having been always accustomed to this, as to many other insignificant expletives, we should think composition strange and incomplete without it. In all such expressions as, a book, a house, a horse, a table, &c., *a* might very properly be termed the *insignificant article*; which was probably the meaning intended by the phrase—indefinite article. The expression, *a* sheep is as definite as, *two* sheep, *three* sheep, *several* sheep, *many* sheep, *the* sheep, *these* sheep, *those* sheep, &c. So, also, when the illiterate say, *a* shilling, *two* shilling; *a* foot, *two* foot, &c.: and we have not the least doubt, that, if all nouns had thus possessed only one termination, the advantage would have been considerable, not only as to simplicity and facility, (for the distinctions of singular and plural frequently cause embarrassment,) but also significancy.

A question long perplexed the author which seems now to admit of an easy answer. Whence originated the perpetual recurrence and useless application of what is called the indefinite article, not only in English, but also in most, or in all of the modern languages? For if *a*, *an*, *un*, (It., Fr., and Sp.,) *ein* (Ger.), be, as they manifestly are, *one*, (UN-US, EN,) how, in the name of significancy, should they be connected with almost every singular noun? If singular mean *one*, why commit the tautology in almost every sentence of adding the adjective *one*?

The sole reason of this fact is, we believe, that the



practice originated when the distinction of singular and plural did not exist ; or, at least, did not generally prevail among nouns ; and when it was as necessary to say *a* horse, or *one* horse, as *a* sheep, or *one* sheep : the habit of applying the numeral adjective ‡ *ane*, (now *one*,) *ein*, *un*, (like many other habits,) remained after the reason on which it was founded had ceased. Many Latin nouns have no distinction of singular and plural, in the nominative case, (and their accusative plural is the same as the nominative,) and a very great proportion of Saxon nouns have, in spite of Saxon grammatists, manifestly no distinction of number. Like the nouns sheep, deer, swine, &c., if not *restricted*, they suggest more than one of a sort or kind to the understanding ; and therefore it was necessary to join to them *ane* or *one*, when one was intended to be indicated ; just as it was necessary to employ the numeral adjectives *two*, *three*, *four*, &c., when *two*, *three*, *four*, were to be denoted.

If, however, there were one regular plural affix to English nouns, we might felicitate ourselves in the possession of it as an important addition to our grammatic treasure ; but, unfortunately, instead of being simple and uniform, it is such a jumble of anomaly as sets all principle and rule at defiance. The principal irregularities may be arranged under the following heads.

1. Some nouns have the obsolete plural affix *en* : as, *Oxen* instead of *Oxes* ; Men, Women, i. e. contr.

of *Manen*, *Womanen*; which ought now to be *Mans*, *Womans*: *Children* and *Brethren* have two obsolete affixes, viz. *er* and *en*; each of which is (we believe) for *es*, adopted from the third declension of Latin nouns; and which we still retain, but generally contract it into *s*.

2. Nouns ending in *O*, have the irregularity of sometimes contracting the affix *es*, and sometimes not: as, *Folio*, *Folios*; *Nuncio*, *Nuncios*; *Punctilio*, *Punctilios*; *Seraglio*, *Seraglios*: *Cargo*, *Cargoes*; *Echo*, *Echoes*; *Hero*, *Heroes*; *Negro*, *Negroes*; *Manifesto*, *Manifestoes*, &c.

This is such a petty irregularity, and at the same time so easily remedied, that it ought not, surely, to remain: let the *e* be uniformly dropped, or uniformly retained: the former seems the more advisable measure.

3. Most nouns ending in *f* or *fe*, are rendered plural by changing *f* or *fe* into *ves*: as, *loaf*, *loaves*; *half*, *halves*; *wife*, *wives*: but why should not these be *loafs*, *halfs*, *wifes*, *staffs*; like *griefs*, *reliefs*, *reproofs*, *ruffs*, &c.? If grammatic authority serve only to establish anomaly, it is itself a nuisance; and our understandings and our practice are more honoured in the breach than in the observance of its tyrannic laws.

4. "Nouns which have *y* in the singular, with no other vowel in the same syllable, change it into *ies* in the plural: as, *beauty*, *beauties*; *fly*, *flies*," &c.

But why should these not be beautys, flys, dutys, &c.; like key, keys; delay, delays, &c.?

This is one of the evils of having more than one alphabetic sign for one sound; and it is of recent introduction, like many other anomalies.

5. Such irregularities as the following seem to have originated in the Saxon antipathy to polysyllables, so discernible in many words, which are reduced to the favourite monosyllable: foot, feet; goose, geese; tooth, teeth; louse, lice; mouse, mice; penny, pence; die, dice. But why not follow analogy, as children and foreigners do in learning our language; and say, *foots, geoses, tooths, louses, mouses, pennys, dies*, &c.? But how strange and ridiculous such words sound! exclaim all the dutiful subjects of established usage. But is it not much more ridiculous to be the slaves of mere custom, however absurd? Only accustom your eyes and ears and mouths for a single month, to the analogies of your own language, in those instances in which the strangest blunders have been consecrated into grammatic proprieties, and you will be reconciled to them for ever.

It is the custom at present, in adopting words from the learned languages, to preserve their learned plural termination. In this we act more strangely than our neighbours; for how are mere English scholars to know the meaning and use of foreign terminations? Why not make the plural of *auto-*

*maton, automaton; criterion, criterions; appendix, appendixes; medium, mediums; memorandum, memorandums; stratum, stratum; vortex, vortices, &c.?* Surely good sense is better than learned pedantry; and it is manifestly more pedantic than judicious to graft foreign peculiarities on a vernacular language; or, in naturalizing learned strangers, not to make them conform to the manners of the people.

---

#### THE VERB.

THIS is the most difficult of all the grammatic entities; and, therefore, as might be expected, it is honoured with an uncommon share of mystical verbosity and metaphysical inanity. The name *verb* (VERBUM) means *word*; which latter is merely a corruption of the former. We have only to suppose, then, that this very formidable part of speech was designated the *word*, by way of eminence, on account of its vast importance. Nor is it worth while to quarrel with a name, when it does not indicate some egregious error or absurdity. If, then, a verb be a word, what is that word when considered as a part of speech? What is its grammatic character? Lindley Murray must reply: "A VERB is a word which signifies to BE, to DO, or to SUFFER; as, 'I am, I rule, I am ruled.'" Other grammatists have attempted greater accuracy of definition; but their at-

tempts have not been sufficiently successful to deserve notice.

It will probably appear to the reader (as it always did to the author) very extraordinary, that the grammarist should define the *verb* to be a *word*; and instantly exemplify his definition by giving, not one word, but two or more words : as, “I am, I rule, I am ruled.” The blunder is easily explained. The definition was not made for the English, or, indeed, any modern language, but for the Greek and the Latin ; in which it can be strictly exemplified : as, SUM, I am ; REGO, I rule ; REGOR, I am ruled : so, also, if we take what is called the infinitive : ESSE, to be ; REGERE, to rule ; REGI, to be ruled. In all these Latin instances the verb is one word ; but each of the English instances consists of, at least, two words. This is another proof of the absurdity of transferring grammatic definitions, distinctions, and rules, from Greek and Latin to the English language ; which is as truly ridiculous as it would be to give the history of Greece or Rome, with a few slight changes of names and dates, as a correct history of England. But how insignificantly diminutive would a vernacular grammar appear without the lucubrations of old Lily, or of Crates Mellotes, *done* into English ! Hence that mass of absurdity which the grammarists have consecrated into English grammar ; and by which they have endeavoured, very sincerely no doubt, to enlighten and edify the youth of the British dominions. Most of it was, from its first

existence, (perhaps in Egypt or Babylon,) dark and chaotic; and all of it as blindly applied to the modern languages, especially to the English, (so dissimilar to Greek and Latin,) is as devoid of reasonableness and utility as the philosophy of Aristotle. To many persons such statements are redundant; and for the sake of brevity, as also of intelligibleness, to mere English scholars, we adhere as closely as possible to the English language.

The question then is, What is a verb? We deny that there is any such entity as a *verb* in the sense of the grammatists: i. e. one, single, separate, uncompounded word, which signifies to be, to do, or to suffer. But it may be replied, Have you not just admitted, that in Latin the definition holds, "a verb is a word"; for SUM, is one word; as also REGO, &c.? True; but each of these is properly a compound word: i. e. two or more words joined together; just as if we were to write, *Iam*, *Irule*, *Iamruled*; or, *tobe*, *torule*, *toberuled*. The movable *affix* in the Latin words, is as properly a distinct word as the *prefix* is in the instances *Irule*, *torule*.

Though, then, the definition "A verb is a word which signifies to be, to do, or to suffer," does hold as to Latin and Greek; it is not true, as to any language whatever, that one simple or uncompounded word can signify, to be, to do, or to suffer. The error of the grammarians originated in mistaking *syntactic* for *verbal* meaning; i. e. in supposing

that one word can convey a meaning which requires two or more words. This error, productive of other errors, and of numerous absurdities and unmeaning verbiages, originated in ignorance concerning the elliptic or abridged state of language, as found existing among every people; for nothing was more calculated to deceive superficial theorists, who would naturally suppose that one word performed the office of several; as if there could be existence without some existent concerning whom the affirmation is made; or action, apart from an agent.

We have already considered the difficulty attending the origin of language, and the origin of some words called *verbs*: and it would answer no useful purpose to detain the reader with another discussion of the same troublesome question. In all those words called verbs, which are manifestly nouns, there is no difficulty: as, "*to hand, to face, to back,*" &c.; "I hand, we hand, they hand;" "brave men back their friends and face their enemies." In such instances, all that is necessary is to join two nouns; or a *connoun* and a noun, or to prefix the preposition *to*, to convey the notion of agency.

Mr. Horne Tooke (as already noticed) holds, that every verb is properly a noun; and that it is something more than a noun: he intimates, moreover, that he agrees with the Stoics in considering the infinitive the proper verb, free from all incumbrance

of number and person. It is difficult to conjecture what he really intended ; but he seems to have considered the affix of the Greek, Latin, Saxon, &c., (in what is called the infinitive mood,) as well as *to*, in the English, to be equivalent to *do*, or *act* ; as if the expression, *to back* a friend, *to face* an enemy, were, *do back* a friend, *do face* an enemy. If such were the case then, *to*, and the Latin affix *are*, &c., are to be considered as properly the verb ; and the proper inquiry would be, what is the nature of that which is thus connected with a noun to convert it into a verb ? After the fullest inquiry and reflection, we are convinced that the verbal affixes, to what is called the infinitive mood, in Latin, Greek, Saxon, &c., are the very same as the simple adjective affixes : *are* is the same word, whether it appear in *Amare*, to love, or *Cellare*, of a cell : *en* (*ein*, Gr.) is the same word, whether it appear in ‡ *Loven*, to love, or *Golden*, of gold. In all such cases the affix merely serves to connect the word going before with the word coming after ; or to give notice that the word to which it is attached, is to be taken in connexion with some other word for the purpose of conveying a particular meaning. In short, the affix in such cases answers the same purpose as our preposition *to* ; which also indicates that one word is to be taken in connexion with another ; and which, like the forementioned affixes, is doubtless a mere particle or fragment of a compound word.



If, then, the common definition, A *verb* is a word which signifies to be, to do, and to suffer, be wrong ; what definition is to be received as correct ? But though we point out the falseness or absurdness of an old doctrine, it does not follow that we must forthwith supply its place with a new one. It is impossible to put any thing sound and solid in the place of baseless theories ; and the purpose of inquiry is generally answered when they are made to vanish away like dreams when men awake. We have just seen that there is no such thing, in the English language, as a verb ; i. e. a word which signifies to be, to do, or to suffer ; for, to express existence, possession, relation, agency, &c., two or more words are necessary ; and whenever one word seems competent to the business, (as in Latin, &c.,) it is not a simple, but a compound word, i. e. two or more words joined together.

But though we discard the old definition ; we must, at least for a little, retain the term *verb* ; if only as a fulcrum on which to rest our lever in demolishing established absurdity.

“ Verbs,” we are told, “ are of three kinds ; ACTIVE, PASSIVE, and NEUTER.” The sole reason why such distinctions were ever applied to the English language, is, that they previously existed in connexion with Latin ; but to suppose that the same distinctions will equally suit all languages, is as unreasonable as to attempt to make a coat to fit

the moon in all her changes. We say nothing at present of the original character of such distinctions; for if they had been distinguished in their first application, by absolute wisdom, they might be perverted into utter folly by being transferred to the English language. The distinctions in question have been discarded by the more sensible grammarians; who, instead of saying verbs are active, passive, or neuter, distinguish them into *Transitive* and *Intransitive*. The only conceivable utility in this distinction is, its subserviency to a grammatic rule; which says, verbs *active* or verbs *transitive* govern the objective case: as, truth ennobles *her*; She comforts *me*, &c. Here *ennobles* is considered a verb *transitive*, because the action passes over to the object; and if that be represented by a pronoun, it must be in what is called the *objective* or *accusative* case: but such instances as, I sit, he lives, they sleep, are denominated *intransitive*, because the effect is confined within the subject or nominative of the verb, and does not pass over to any object.

This distinction, however, might be very well dispensed with; for it would answer every purpose, even of arbitrary grammar, to say, When a pronoun is the object of a verb, or that in which the action of a verb terminates, it must be in the objective case: as, "I love *her*;" "She loves *me*," &c.; not, "I love *she*;" "She loves *I*."

With all that avidity for multiplicity of distinction

which characterizes grammatists, there is a distinction which has wholly escaped them; though it seems of some use, and has long obtained the patronage of Hebrew grammar: it may be denominated the *verb causative*; and all we intend is a little elucidation. *Lay* is manifestly the *causative* of *Lie*; for it is equivalent to, *cause* or *make* to lie: thus, also, *Sit* and *Set*; *Rise*, *Raise*, *Rouse*; *See*, *Show*, &c. &c. In this manner a great number of words are employed *causatively*, to avoid a *lengthy* mode of expression: as, to *run a hare*, for, to *make a hare run*; *Show*, for, *make to see*, &c. In many instances the same word is diversified in spelling and pronunciation from the original form, when employed *causatively*: as, *Show*, a diversity of *See*; *Raise*, *Rouse* of *Rise*; *Set* of *Sit*; *Lay* of *Lie*, &c.: and thus, as will be found in the Dictionary, many words are resolvable into one word, which do not seem to have any connexion. Many verbs, however, are employed both *causatively* and *uncausatively*, or, as commonly expressed, both as *active* and *neuter*, without any diversity of spelling or pronunciation.

“To verbs,” we are told, “belong, NUMBER, PERSON, MOOD, and TENSE.” This also is affirmed concerning English words, for no reason whatever, except that the same grammatic position had previously existed in connexion with Greek and Latin. “Verbs,” it is said, “have two numbers, the *singular* and the *plural*: as, I love, We love.” Here, again, the ex-

ample is at variance with the definition ; for the distinction, as to singular and plural, exists not in the word *love*, but in the *connouns* *I* and *We*. In Latin, indeed, the definition can be exemplified : as, *AMO*, I love ; *AMAMUS*, We love. Here are two numbers, singular and plural ; because the terminations of the verb perform the office of the *connouns* in our language.

“ In each number,” we are told, “ there are three persons ; as,

*Singular.*

*Plural.*

First Person, I love ;

We love ;

Second Person, Thou lovest ;

Ye or You love ;

Third Person, He loves.

They love.

“ Thus the verb, in some parts of it, *varies its endings, to express or agree with different persons of the same number*. In the plural number of the verb there is no variation of ending to express the different persons ; and the verb, in the three persons plural, is the same as in the first person singular. Yet *this scanty provision* of terminations is sufficient for all the purposes of discourse, and no ambiguity arises from it : the verb being always attended, either with the noun, expressing the subject acting or acted upon, or with the pronoun representing it” !!

It appears, then, that diversities of termination are not necessary to the English verb, as it is always at-

tended either with a noun or pronoun; which noun or pronoun answers the purpose accomplished by termination in Greek and Latin: and for the same reason that the verb is without any variation in connexion with I, We, You, They; it might also have been without any variation in connexion with Thou, He, She, It: as, I love; Thou love; He, She, or It love; We love, &c. It is evident that the termination, or affix *est*, after Thou, and *eth* changed into *es*, *s*, after He, She, or It, answer no necessary or useful purpose; but occasion much embarrassment. Disuse these useless diversities of termination, and you discard at once nearly all the rules of syntax.

Whatever may have been the origin of the affixes *est*, *eth*, *es*—they are, evidently, nuisances in the English language, and therefore ought to be discontinued: but perhaps the curiosity of the reader, respecting their adoption, may call for some explanation. We find, in our *olden* literature, *eth* connected with all the persons and numbers of pronouns (*en* was also generally employed as an affix, at one time, especially in the plural number of verbs): as, I *loveth*, Thou *loveth*, He *loveth*, We *loveth*, Ye *loveth*, They *loveth*. From this, it is evident, that *eth* could not be either a *personal* or a *numeral* affix: i. e. whatever it might indicate, if it indicated any thing, it could not denote number or person. After more inquiry and reflection than the question is perhaps

worth, considered by itself, the conclusion in the mind of the author was, that the affix *eth* was corrupted from the Latin affix *at*, *et*, or *it*, (which has a corresponding affix in Greek,) as found in what is termed the frequentative verb, (as AGIT-O from AG-O,) as also in the supine, &c.; or, that it is *Thau* (Goth.), *Thue* (Gér. Thun *infin.*), i. e. *Do affixed* instead of being put before the verb, as it is at present, when employed. The last seems the more probable conjecture; for when *Do* is employed the *affix* disappears; which is some approach to evidence, that the one was considered equivalent to the other, if not the very same: as, I do love, Thou do love, or dost love; he do, or doth love: not thou dost lovest, he does loves. Whatever may have been the origin of *est*, *eth*, *es*, contracted into *s*, they are manifestly useless and troublesome appendages which deserve no protection.

#### MOODS.

We are quite weary of grammatic inanities, and we will therefore dispatch them as quickly as possible. The doctrine of *moods* is self-convicted of absurdity: for the grammatists are obliged to make such a confession as the following: "Though this Mood (the Imperative) derives its name from its intimation of command, it is used on occasions of a very opposite nature, even in the humblest supplications of an in-

ferior being to one who is infinitely his superior : as, *Give us this day our daily bread* ; and *forgive us our trespasses*”!!—Like true Babel-builders, their tongues are divided concerning the exact number and proper definition of Moods. Yet, with all their love of complication, an obvious distinction escapes them ; for if what is called the Infinitive Mood deserve any designation, it ought to be called the *impersonal* verb ; or the impersonal state of the verb ; but the term *impersonal* was pre-engaged ; being applied to what is evidently the *third person* of some verbs—or verbs that are used only in the third person.

In reference to Greek and Latin, the traditional doctrine of Moods may be tolerated ; because it serves at least the purpose of designating the various terminations of verbs, which must be committed to memory ; but in reference to the English language, it possesses not one redeeming quality.

---

### TENSE

[Corruption of *TEMPUS* contracted into *Time*].

The grammatic tongues have been wonderfully divided about *TENSE* ; which is not surprising when we consider how much the subject has baffled the most metaphysical intellects ; and that it extorted the following humble confession from the great St.

Augustine: Quid sit Tempus, si nemo quærat a me, scio; si quis interroget, nescio. The worthy father, it appears, knew all about *tempus*, i. e. *time*, alias *tense*, when no one disturbed his contemplative abstraction; but the moment he was put into the witness-box, he was confounded out of his knowledge; and could not even say as much as a dial-plate—Tempus fugit; but was obliged to utter the mortifying word *nescio*! Perhaps it would have been as well if the grammatists had imitated the humility and modesty of St. Augustine; and had given us *Nescio* under *Tense*, instead of those less intelligible words with which they have adorned their *Nescientia*. Mr. Harris has enumerated no fewer than twelve tenses; but more moderate believers are content with half the number; not without an apology for insisting on so many. “Tense,” they tell us, “being the distinction of time, might seem to admit only of the present, past, and future; *but to mark it more accurately*, it is made to consist of six variations, viz. the PRESENT, the IMPERFECT, the PERFECT, the PLUPERFECT, and the FIRST and SECOND FUTURE TENSES”!!! Others, still more moderate, are content with half this number; and insist only on three tenses; the PAST, the PRESENT, and the FUTURE; others refuse to admit that there is a future or present tense; and some deny the existence of tenses altogether. In all such cases of diverse judgment and doubtful distinction, simplicity is an



argument of considerable weight; so that, if there were no preponderating evidence, we would rather agree with those who hold that there are no tenses, than with those who assert that there are three, six, or twelve: but though the doctrine of tenses has, (like prediction in certain cases,) to some extent, realized itself; and we have, or seem to have, some notion of distinctions as to time, in connexion with verbs; yet we think it can be as clearly proved as the nature of the case admits, that no such distinction really belongs to them; and, that where such a notion does exist, it is wholly accessory or associated; not primary—not intended to be indicated by any changes which are made upon the words called verbs, in any language. The inquiry, indeed, is attended with no substantial utility, except as it serves to remove false theory; for *nothing* is preferable to absurd verbiages; silence is better than loquacious impertinence. Before, however, we enter directly on the consideration of *tense*; let us first examine those words designated *auxiliary* or *helping* verbs; for the right understanding of these will, in a great measure, supersede the necessity of a formal disquisition concerning *tense*.

---

AUXILIARY OR HELPING VERBS CONSIDERED : viz.  
DO, HAVE, SHALL, WILL, MAY, CAN, LET, MUST,  
BE.

HERE two affixes must be noticed as being really all the changes of termination that properly and usefully belong to English verbs ; viz. *ed* and *ing*. The last was, anciently, *ante*, *ant*, *and*, &c.; (for there is great diversity of spelling in the *olden* literature,) and was evidently borrowed from the Latin participle : *ing* seems merely a spelling of the same affix, accommodated to the nasal pronunciation that acquired possession of the English language after the Conquest. The use of *ing* is precisely the same as the participle-affix *ans*, *ens*, in Latin, and ON in Greek ; and has precisely the same use, and is, in fact, the same word as the adjective affix *an*, *en*, &c.; for all the difference between what is called a participle and what is called an adjective, is, that the one is formed on a verb and the other on a noun ; and this difference is, in many cases, so very slight, that the same word is considered either adjective or participle.

The corresponding, or rather, the same affix, in the other languages, is, *ande* (Swed.), *ende* (Ger.), *ant* (Fr.), *ante* (It.). From this view, it plainly appears, that as the Latins borrowed the affix in question from the Greeks, their literary masters ; so the mo-

dern nations of Europe (concerning Slavonic we give no opinion) borrowed it from the Latins, their literary masters.

The affix *ed*, *at* (Swed.), *et* (Ger.), *ato* (It.), is evidently the same as that which exists in what is misnamed (for it is active as well as passive) the Latin perfect, passive participle. Thus, DUBIT-O, DUBITAT-US, is, with us, *Doubt*, *Doubted*, &c. &c. If, then, the English affix be merely that of the Latin; what is this Latin affix? We can hardly expect absolute certainty in such a matter; but we believe it is what is called the third person singular of the perfect, with adjective terminations appended. Thus, AMAT, he loves, AMAVIT, he has loved, *Amavitus*, a, um, contr. into *Amat-us*, a, um. The *av* is a contraction of HAB-EO: so that *Amavit* is equivalent to, *love-have-he, she, or it*; *Amaverunt* is equivalent to, *love-have-they*; or *they-have-love*.

Whatever fatuous distinctions may be interposed respecting "the *Perfect Tense* not only referring to what is past, but also conveying an allusion to the present time"; every one knows that there is no distinction of meaning, or difference of application, between what are called the Preterite Imperfect and the Preterite Perfect in Latin. The reason is plain: *Amabat* consists of the three same words as *Amavit*; i. e. *Am*, love, *Hab*, have, and *At*, signifying agent or subject, he, she, or it, as determined by the connexion.

For the same reason that the *preterites* in Latin often appear to indicate past time or perfected action; so the English affix *ed* often appears to indicate the same; but unfortunately for distinctions, even of the simplest kind, the definition propounded as if the English verb denoted action either *terminated* or *not terminated*, is not free from objections.

We have no wish to discard the affix *ed*; but it is evidently much less necessary or useful than grammarians would readily admit; for many verbs are destitute of it, (such as *shut, set, thrust, spread, &c.*) without any inconvenience or loss of significancy; and when ungrammatical people omit the affix, or employ what is called the Present instead of the Imperfect, their meaning is perfectly intelligible. The truth is, we are very apt to fancy that useless things are necessary, merely because we have been used to them; and we have not the smallest doubt that, if the affix in question had never been adopted, our language would have been as significant without, as it now is with, this termination. But if it were regularly affixed, there would be no objection to its existence: the great grammatical evils we have to complain of, are those irregularities which so much abound; and which serve only to render the verbal apparatus difficult and unwieldy.

If we discard all useless parts and irregularities, what are called the auxiliary verbs, will appear in the following manner:

I do, Thou do, He, She, or It do. We do, You do, They do. I doed, Thou doed, He, &c., doed. We doed, You doed, They doed.

To do, doing, doed.

I have, Thou have, He, &c., have. We have, You have, They have. I haved, Thou haved, He, &c., haved. We haved, You haved, They haved.

To have, having, haved.

In consequence of *haved* being contracted into *had*, we have such extraordinary combinations as the following: I *have had*; I *had had*; and not only the former, but the latter of these expressions is set forth in proper grammatic order, as a necessary and regular tense!

Let and Must require no notice in this place. Can and May merely express power: *I can go*, is equivalent to, I am able to go—I have power, permission, liberty, &c., to go. I may resign, is equivalent to, I have power to resign: and in spite of fatuous doctrines concerning potentials, the shorter is merely an abridged form of the longer expression. *May*, when the affix *ed* is assumed, is corrupted into *Might* instead of *Mayed*. *Could* seems a corruption of *Canned*.

Will (VOL-O) is,

I will, Thou will, He, &c., will. We will, You will, They will. I willed (corrupted into *Would*), Thou willed, He, &c., willed.

To will, willing, willed.

Shall,

I shall, Thou shall, He, &c., shall; We shall, &c.:  
I shalled (corrupted into *Should*), &c.

Shall seems most entitled to the designation *auxiliary* verb, for it does not appear to have much distinct significancy of its own; but it is, we believe, merely a diversity of *will*; and considering the perplexity caused by it, not only to Scotchmen and foreigners, but even to the English themselves, (who often blunder in applying *shall* and *will*,) its existence is no grammatic cause of congratulation. What will the reader think, when told, that thirty or forty rules have been prescribed as a necessary directory to the true application and proper distinction of *Shall* and *Will*? It would not be very easy, even in a long course of petty criticism, to render English as invincibly difficult as Greek: but if the *collective wisdom* of the grammatic world were deified with legislative omnipotence, the business would, in time, be most effectually accomplished.

The preceding verbs have some irregularities; but they are simplicity itself when compared with the verb *BE*; in which there is more of wanton anomaly than could well be found within the same compass, if we were to search all the languages of the world. The remark of Mr. Turner (who possesses too much good sense to be a blind admirer) applies equally to the English substantive verb: "The Anglo-Saxon substantive verb is compounded

that is either necessary or useful: and to change *Train* from an active to what is called a passive state, all that is necessary is, *Be* put before it, as accompanied with the affix *ed*. Thus,

I be loved, thou be loved, &c.

I beed loved, &c.

To be loved, Being loved; Having beed loved.

We have no doubt that if *ed* had never been adopted as a verbal affix, the business could have been well accomplished without it; but having been adopted, it may remain; only let irregularities be banished for ever.

When the *auxiliaries* are united with the regular verbs, the junction is effected in the following manner:

I do train, thou do train, he do train, &c.: I doed train, thou doed train, he doed train, &c.

I have trained, &c.: I haved trained, &c.

I will train, thou will train, he will train, &c.

I shall train, &c.

I shall have trained, thou shall have trained, he shall or will have trained.

N. B. *I shall have trained*, like *I had had*, &c., is one of those clumsy phrases which no person, tolerably master of composition, would employ: in fact, though exhibited in grammars, a person might read English for years and not meet with such expressions.

In the simple manner as above may the other

*auxiliaries* be employed : as, I can train, &c., I may train, &c.

Can it be necessary to work up these simple combinations into such unmeaning entities as *grammatical moods*? There are, surely, less fantastic methods of *teaching the young idea how to shoot!* But if the *Moods* be abandoned, the *Tenses* yet remain. We had almost forgot the *tenses*; but we suppose, that by this *time* the reader is disposed to care very little about them.

The truth is, as before intimated, if any notion as to time ever exist in connexion with any verb, it is wholly accessory or associated, and not signified by the verb itself. In general, what is called the present *tense* simply indicates action, being, relation, &c.: what are called the *past* tenses, generally indicate existence, action, relation, &c., as terminated; which, of course, is closely associated in the mind with the notion of the *past*. What is called future tense properly indicates volition. Thus if I say, I will publish the present work in the month of May: the sentence is equivalent to, I intend to publish in the month of May; or, I am resolved to publish in the month of May. Here the notion of *future* is manifestly an associated, not the primary notion. It is true that the word is applied to many objects in which volition does not exist; as in the following expressions: The moon will rise at eight to-night; the sun will rise at six to-morrow morning. These



are instances of a very numerous class of expressions which are metaphoric or allusive, rather than strictly and literally proper; though, from having been long used, they appear quite literal.

But the subject of *tense* is not worth discussion; and if it were not that we think it of some importance to oppose all unmeaning definitions and useless distinctions, we would not have been at the trouble to call it in question. But if the grammatic doctrine of tenses were admitted, what is gained by it? Does it impart any instruction? Does it render Tyro better acquainted with language or more master of composition? If it does not answer such a purpose, it is evidently worse than useless.

---

#### IRREGULAR VERBS.

THESE, like all anomalies, are exceedingly troublesome, especially to learners. Most of them, evidently, originated in blundering carelessness; or, in that aversion to polysyllables which operated so powerfully on our Saxon ancestors. Had grammar-makers endeavoured to remove such irregularities, they would have done some good; but instead of such useful service, their first labour was to consecrate and confirm all the perversions which they found actually existing; and thus they prevented our language from *righting* itself, as it would have done,

to a considerable degree, if it had been left wholly to analogy, free from the fetters of arbitrary rules established on anomalous precedents; for there is a constant effort on the part of children and foreigners, and all the ungrammatical, to restore uniformity; which effort is so well backed by reason, that it would doubtless prevail but for the despotic authority of written grammar.

With the view of inducing influential writers and speakers to set the example of banishing irregularities from the verbs, we will present them in the following distributions :

First, Verbs that have both a regular and irregular form :

Awake	Awaked		
	† Awoke	† Awaken	
Bend	Bended	† Bent	
Bereave	Bereaved	† Bereft	
Build	Builded	† Built	
Catch	Catched	† Caught	
Chide	Chided	† Chid	† Chidden
Cleave	Cleaved	† Clave	
Clothe	Clothed	† Clad	
Crow	Crowed	† Crew	
Dare	Dared	† Durst	
Deal	Dealed	† Dealt	
Dig	Digged	† Dug	
Dwell	Dwelled	† Dwelt	
Freeze	Froezed	† Froze	† Frozen

<b>Gild</b>	<b>gilded</b>	<b>† gilt</b>	
<b>Grave</b>	<b>graved</b>	<b>† graven</b>	
<b>Gird</b>	<b>girded</b>	<b>† girt</b>	
<b>Hew</b>	<b>hewed</b>	<b>† hewn</b>	
<b>Knit</b>	<b>knitted</b>	<b>† knit</b>	
<b>Load</b>	<b>loaded</b>	<b>† laden</b>	
<b>Mow</b>	<b>mowed</b>	<b>† mown</b>	
<b>Saw</b>	<b>sawed</b>	<b>† sawn</b>	
<b>Shape</b>	<b>shaped</b>	<b>† shapen</b>	
<b>Shave</b>	<b>shaved</b>	<b>† shaven</b>	
<b>Shear</b>	<b>sheared</b>	<b>† shorn</b>	
<b>Shine</b>	<b>shined</b>	<b>† shone</b>	
<b>Show</b>	<b>showed</b>	<b>† shown</b>	
<b>Shrink</b>	<b>shranked</b>	<b>† shrunk</b>	
<b>Slay</b>	<b>slayed</b>	<b>† slew</b>	<b>† slain</b>
<b>Sow</b>	<b>sowed</b>		<b>† sown</b>
<b>Spill</b>	<b>spilled</b>	<b>† spilt</b>	
<b>Strive</b>	<b>strived</b>	<b>† strove</b>	<b>† striven</b>
<b>Strow</b>	<b>strowed</b>	<b>† strown</b>	
<b>† Strew</b>	<b>† strewed</b>		
<b>Swell</b>	<b>swelled</b>	<b>† swollen</b>	
<b>Thrive</b>	<b>thrived</b>	<b>† throve</b>	<b>† thriven</b>
<b>Wax</b>	<b>waxed</b>	<b>† waxen</b>	
<b>Work</b>	<b>worked</b>	<b>† wrought</b>	
<b>Wring</b>	<b>wringed</b>	<b>† wrung</b>	

There can be no unwillingness, even in the most dutiful disciples of custom, to discard all the above forms with the dagger prefixed; for most of them

have an *olden* uncouthness, except to the lovers of antique obsoleteness and *whilom* forms of literature.

Secondly, Verbs that might be restored to analogy, or rendered regular without offering much violence to established usage: as,

Beseech	beseached	† besought		
Bleed	bleeded	† bled		
Blood	blooded	is still better		
Blow	blowed	† blew	† blown	
Choose	choosed	† chose	† chosen	
Cleave	cleaved	† cleft	† clove	† cloven
	to split.			
Cling	clinged	† clung		
Creep	creeped	† crept		
Draw	drewed	† drew	† drawn	
Drive	drived	† drove	† driven	
Drink	drinked	† drank	† drunk	
Feel	feeled	† felt		
Flee	fleed	† fled		
Fly	flyed	† flew	† flown	

One of these duplicates had better be discarded.

Fling	flinged	† flung		
Forsake	forsaked	† forsook	† forsaken	
Grow	growed	† grew	† grown	
Hang	hanged	† hung		
Hear	heard	† heard		
Keep	keeped	† kept		
Know	knowed	† knew	† known	
Lay	layed	† laid		

Lie	lied	† lay	† lain
Leave	leaved	† left	
Loss	losed	† lost	
Pay	payed	† paid	
Ring	ringed	† rang	† rung
Rise	rised	† rose	† risen
Say	sayed	† said	
See	seed	† saw	† seen
Shake	shaked	† shook	† shaken
Shoe	shoed	† shod	
Sing	singed	† sang	† sung
Sink	sinked	† sunk	
Sleep	sleeped	† slept	
Slide	slided	† slid	† slidden
Sling	slinged	† slung	
Slink	slinked	† slunk	
Smite	smited	† smote	† smitten
Speak	speaked	† spoke	† spoken
Speed	speeded	† sped	
Spend	spended	† spent	
Spin	spinned	† span	† spun
Spit	spitted	† spat	† spitten
Spring	springed	† sprang	† sprung
Steal	stealed	† stole	† stolen
Stick	sticked	† stuck	
Sting	stinged	† stung	
Stink	stinked	† stank	† stunk
Stride	strided	† strode	† strid † stridden
Strike	striked	† struck	† stricken

Sting	stinged	† stung		
Swear	swear	† swore	† sworn	
Swim	swimmed	† swam	† swum	
Swing	swinged	† swung		
Teach	tached	† taught		
Tear	teared	† tore	† torn	
Tell	telled	† told		
Think	think	† thought		
Throw	throw	† threw	† thrown	
Weave	weaved	† wove	† woven	
Weep	weep	† wept		
Win	winn	† won		

The most of these are already familiar to us, as being constantly heard among the ungrammatical members of society, who are the great majority of the whole population; and when our mouths and ears have somewhat practised on these analogies, they will not *shy* much at such *strange* regularities as the following:

Abide	abided	† abode			
Be	beed	† been			
† Am	† was				
Bear	beared	† bare	† bore	† borne	† born
Begin	beginned	† began	† begun		
Bid	bidded	† bade	† bad	† bidden	† bid
Bind	binded	† bound			
Bite	bited	† bit	† bitten		
Break	break	† broke	† broken		

Breed	breeded	† bred	
Bring	bringed	† brought	
Buy	buyed	† bought	
Come	comed	† came	
Do	Doed	† Did	† Done
Fall	fallied	† fell	† fallen
Feed	feedied	† fed	
Fight	fightied	† fought	
Find	findied	† found	
Give	gived	† gave	† given
Go	goed	† went	† gone
Have	haved	† had	
Hide	hided	† hid	† hidden
Hold	holdied	† held	† holden
Lead	leadied	† led	
Make	maked	† made	
Meet	meetied	† met	
Rend	rendied	† rent	
Ride	ridied	† rode	† rid
Run	runned	† ran	† run
Seek	seekied	† sought	
Send	sended	† sent	
Shoot	shootied	† shot	
Sit	sittied	† sat	† sitten
Stand	standied	† stood	
Take	taked	† took	† taken
Tread	treadied	† trod	† trodden
Wind	winded	† wound	
Write	writied	† wrote	† written

The following have no change of termination ; yet, as already noticed, they answer every purpose of speech as well as those that have the affix *ed*: having a great affection for simplicity, we are rather partial to such unchanged verbs ; but as *ed* has been adopted, and has become the general rule, perhaps it ought to be uniformly affixed : thus, Beat, beated ; Burst, bursted ; Cast, casted ; Cost, costed ; Cut, cutted ; eat, eated, † eaten ; Hit, hitted ; Let, letted ; Put, putted ; Read, readed ; Rid, rided ; Set, setted ; Shed, sheded ; Shred, Shreded ; Shut, shutted ; Split, splitted ; Spread, spreaded ; Sweat, sweated ; Thrust, thrusted.

Observe,

1. That most of the irregular verbs have descended from Saxon times ; when there was a different manner of forming what is called the *imperfect* besides affixing *ed*.

2. The termination *en*, which appears so often in what is called the perfect, passive participle, is a *relic* of a regular affix, now obsolete ; and for the same reason that it has been wholly discontinued in what is called the infinitive *mood*, (for we never say or write to loven, &c.,) it ought to be entirely disused, except as an immovable affix ; as, *flaxen*, *golden*, *flatten*, *blacken*, &c.

3. Many of the irregularities exhibited above, are merely contractions or corruptions of the verbs with the regular affix : as, Bereft contraction of Bereaved ; Clad of Clothed ; Dealt of Dealed ; Dwelt of Dwel-



The Prefixes may be presented in the following classes :

1. Greek.

AN, (both *An* and *Un* in Gothic,) IN, and both In and Un with us : as, *Involuntary*, *Unwilling*; i. e. not voluntary, not willing : so that the prefix *an*, *in*, *un*, has precisely the meaning of NE, NON, (i. e. NE, NE,) Not : it is a *negative* Prefix.

N. B. The Greek grammarians have made the same mistake about the above prefix as the English grammarians, concerning what they call the indefinite article. Both say, that *A* becomes *An* before a word beginning with a vowel ; whereas, *An* becomes *A* before a word beginning with a consonant. Observe again, that one of our *duplicates* of this prefix, i. e. *Un*, is derived directly from Greek, through our Gothic ancestors ; the other from the Latin. Hence we prefix *Un* to Saxon words (themselves corruptions of Greek and Latin); and IN, the Latin corruption of AN, to Latin words : as, *Involuntary*, *Unwilling*. We perceive something of impropriety, or uncouthness, i. e. a departure from established usage, if we interchange them : *inwilling*, *unwolluntary* ; but the latter being more vernacular, or idiomatic, does better than the former. Of course, as a consistent advocate of simplicity and uniformity, the author would have one of these *duplicates* of the negative prefix discontinued ; and that which was adopted from the Latin, as being less idiomatic, should be turned off ; but to this there is certainly a

great obstacle; for many words compounded of *In*, have been received into our language: as *Infirm*, *Infallible*, &c.

In addition to all the other anomalies, there are many useless diversities of the same word, which have been adopted first directly from the Greek, then from Latin, Italian, French, &c. &c.: thus many forms of the same verb, noun, &c., have been imported from other languages; and then these have been yet more diversified by the caprices of spelling and pronunciation.

ANA or AN, which is the same in Ger., and with us changed into *On*. This is a word of frequent occurrence; but it is not much used as a prefix.

AN is changed into EN, changed into IN; which we have both as a prefix and a preposition. Of this, also, we have a duplicate, which we borrowed from the French; as, *Inquire*, *Enquire*; *Indite*, *Endite*, &c. It would certainly be advisable to discard the French and adhere uniformly to the Latin form of spelling: as, *Inchant*, † *Enchant*; *Indict*, † *En-dict*; *Ingrave*, † *Engrave*, &c.

There can hardly be any reasonable doubt that ANA, AN, EN, (with us *On*, *In*,) and AN, A, (*In*, with us *Un* and *In* negative,) are but one and the same word, or fragment of a word; and that the difference of meaning is owing to ellipsis, i. e. difference of composition.

ANTI, in front of, directed to, opposed to: it has only the last meaning when a prefix with us: as,

*Antireformer*, i. e. one who is opposed to reform; *Antiaholitionist*, one who is opposed to the abolition of negro-slavery. ANTE (i. e. *Anti*) is equivalent to, in the front, ahead of, before: *Antediluvian*, i. e. before the DILUVIUM, corrupted into *deluge*; *Antemeridian*, i. e. before the sun be at the meridian—before noon. From ANTE is *Avante* (It.), (i. e. *a-ante*) contracted into *Van*.

APO, AB, (contr. into A,) and Ger. ‡ Aff, ‡ Af, Off, Of. Both Off and Of are frequently used; but only the former is employed as an affix, and that but seldom.

EK, EX, Ex, contracted into E; cor. into ‡ Uss, ‡ Ust, *Aus* (Ger.), Out. Out is not much used as a prefix: Ex is much employed as a prefix in Greek and Latin, and *Aus* in Ger. The general meaning is the same in all the different languages; i. e. it is compounded of that of the prefix, and of that of the other word. EXLEX and *Outlaw* both mean *out of*, or *without law*; only the first is a person that is not subject to law; the second is a person that has not the protection of law.

On Ex is formed EXTRA, i. e. out of, beyond: Extraordinary, beyond ordinary; Extraparochial, not comprehended within any parish.

ENERTHE, NERTHE, (literally, in the earth,) cor. into INFRA, (whence INFERUS, INFERIOR, INFERNUS, &c.) and into *Under*, ‡ Neath, (whence Beneath,) Nether.

HEMI, SEMI, i. e. *half*: as Hemisphere, i. e. a

half sphere ; Semicircle, a half circle, or the half of a circle. **HEMI** is a contr. of **HEMISA**, a contr. of **HE MESSE** ; i. e. the feminine article, and **MESSE**, **MEDIA**, *medium*, *middle*.

**PARA**, **PERI**, **PER**, &c., **PER**. This, like so many other *particles*, or verbal fragments much in use, is exceedingly vague. As a Greek prefix it occurs in but few words adopted into the English language ; and therefore its meaning will be explained with these in the Dictionary : as a Latin prefix, **PER** means through, completely, much : as, **Perfect**, completely done, finished, complete ; **Perform**, to form completely, to finish, &c. When not employed as a prefix, **Per** is equivalent to *by* : as, *per centum*—by the hundred.

**PRO**, **PRO**, **PRÆ**, cor. into *For*, *Fore*. **PRÆ**, *Pre*, and **FORE**, as prefixes, are exactly equivalent : as, **Preordain**, **Foreordain** ; **Predict**, **Foretell**, &c. **PRO** is generally equivalent to **Forward**, (i. e. **Forward**,) or **Forth** : as, **Produce**, i. e. to lead forward, or bring forth ; **Propel**, drive forward, &c. *For* is prefixed to very few words, and is equivalent to **PRO** in some of its connexions and applications.

**HUPER**, or **HYPER**, **SUPER**, **SUPRA**, cor. into *Up*, *Upper*, *Uber* and *Oben* (Ger.), † *Aber*, *Ober* (Heb.), *Over*, † *Bove* (*Boven*, Dutch), i. e. *Be over*, whence *Above*. It is not meant that *Ober* (Heb.), † *Aber*, &c., are derived from **HUPER**, as **SUPER**, &c. : but they are all manifestly the same word with the same meaning. **Hypercritical**, i. e. **Over critical**;

Supernatural, above natural, or above the course of nature; Supervisor, overseer, &c. **SUPER** is contr. into *Sur* by the French: Surcharge, Surfeit, Survey, &c.; i. e. overcharge, overdo, overlook, or view all over, &c.

**N. B.** *Aber*, in the names of towns, means *over*, like *Sur*, *Upon*, &c.: as, Aberdeen, i. e. Over or Upon the Don; Abergavenny, i. e. Over the Gavenny; Aberistwyth, i. e. Over the Istwyth, &c.

The etymologists, who often blunder respecting the most obvious derivations, must needs have *Aber* to mean *mouth*, for no reason in the world save the accidental circumstance of some of the towns, in whose names it is found, being seated near the mouth of rivers.

*Inver*, i. e. **INFRA**, is just the opposite of *Aber*: as, Inverness, i. e. Under the Ness; Inverury, i. e. Under the Ury, &c. Thus we have Newcastle-Under-Line as well as Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, &c.

**HUPO** or **HYPO**, changed into **SUB**, whence **SUBTER**; all which are prefixes: we have few Greek words with the prefix **HYPO**; but we have many Latin words with **SUB**, &c.: as, Subscribe; i. e. Underwrite, or write under; Sub-tenant, i. e. Under-tenant, &c.

**DIA**, **DIS**, **DE**, through, from, out, apart. The primary use of both **Dis** and **De** may be termed *separative*: as, Diffuse, to pour out, or asunder; Depart, to part from, leave, go off: in many words they rather add to the *force* than to the *meaning* of

words: Demonstrate, to show forth (MONSTRO, to show); Despoil, to spoil, &c. In many words they are simply *negative*: Discredit, not to credit, &c. In some words DE has the signification of Down or Downwards: as, Descend, go down; Degrade, make to descend to a lower *grade*, step, or station; Despise, literally, to look down upon.

Dis, De, like Ex, E, Ab, Se, are directly opposite to Ad, Con, Ob, In. The last may be termed *connectives*: the first disconnectives. As negatives, Dis, De, Un, are exactly equivalent: Discover, Uncover (the first is now used only metaphorically); De-throne, Unthroned; Demoralize, to render *immoral*, &c.

MALUS, Mal, ill, bad, contracted into *Mes*, *Me* (Fr.), Mis: Malecontent, Mal-content (Fr.); Mal-formation; Misuse, Misadventure, &c. *Mésuser*, *Mésaventure* (Fr.), i. e. not well content, bad formation, to use ill, a bad adventure: thus, Miscalculate, Misadvise, Mistake, &c.

The following are Latin prefixes or prepositions:

*Ad*, cor. into ‡ *Adu*, ‡ *Du*, now *To*, and into *At*; and contracted into *A* in It., Fr., Sp., and Eng.: as, Abed, Asleep, Ashore, Aground, &c.: i. e. in bed, in sleep, on shore, on ground, &c. In all such expressions as, To go a begging, a fishing; a hunting, &c., *a* is AD contracted; and the meaning is, To go *to* begging, *to* fishing, &c. AD and its contr. *A*, and its diversified forms, *At*, *To*, have precisely the same meaning.

The last consonant of the prefix is usually changed into the first consonant of the word with which it is joined ; as, ADNUNCIO, ANNUNCIO, to announce ; ASSULTO, to *assault*, i. e. leap upon, to attack.

The illiterate classes of the English, particularly cockneys, are guilty of using *a* (i. e. *ad*) most unreasonably : as, I was a saying, he was a hearing, he is a going.

CIRCUM, in a *circle*, round, about.

Circumnavigate, to navigate round, or sail round ; Circumambulate, to amble, or walk round, &c.

INTER, (i. e. IN and *ter* an adjective affix,) within, between, among ; Interline, to write between lines ; Interlope, to leap between, or among ; Interregnum, Interreign, the time between the reign of one king and that of another.

INTRO, in or into: Introduce, (DUCO, lead,) to lead, or bring in, &c.

INTRA, within.

INTERNUS, INTERNALIS, *internal*.

INTERIOR.

INTROEO, corrupted (through the Fr.) into *Enter*, whence *Entry*, *Entrance*, &c. See EO in the Dictionary.

CON, with, to: CONCURRO, *concur*, run together, unite ; Confront, to place front to front ; Confluent, flowing together ; Commingle, to mingle together.

CONTRA, corrupted into Counter ; facing, opposite, against : Contradict (DICO, speak), to speak against, or deny ; Counteract, to act in opposition to ; Coun-

termand, to order the contrary of what was ordered before, &c.

CONTRARIUS, *Contrary*; CONTRARIETAS, *Contrariety*.

OB (EPI), upon, to, before, for, &c.: OBLIGO, *Oblige* (LIGO, bind), bind to; *Occur* (Curro), run to, meet, happen.

TRANS, contracted into *Tra* (It.), and cor. into *Through*, (and *Très*, Fr.) *Thorough* (*Durch*, Ger.): it answers to *through*, *over*, *beyond*: Transgress, Trespass, to *pass over*; *Transatlantic*, beyond the Atlantic; Translucid, shining through, clear. *Très* is employed by the French as we employ *very*, *exceedingly*.

ULTRA, (cor. into *Outre*, Fr.), beyond, above, high, &c.; Ultra-royalist, one who has very high notions of royalty, a high tory.

ULTERIOR, further.

SINE, without, (i. e. SIT NE, be not,) contr. into SE, is strictly a *separative* or *disconnective*; Segregate, to separate from the flock; SELIGO, SELECTUM, *Select*, to choose out of. This prefix has much the same use as *De*, *Dis*, *Di*, and *Un*, *In*.

RE, again, back: Re-enact, enact again; Restate, state again; Rebound, bound back.

In Dutch Re is corrupted into *Her*; as, *Herplant*, replant; *Hermaak*, remake.

It is unnecessary to explain those words sometimes employed as *prefixes*, which have a separate existence in the language: such as, *With*, *Down*,



&c. There is but one *Anglo* prefix that appears to require notice, viz. *Be*: as in *Befriend*, *Bespeak*, *Belie*, &c.

This prefix is possibly the verb *Be*; but we rather think it is the preposition *By* (*Bey*, Ger), i. e. *Abu*, Goth., i. e. *AB*.

In some cases this prefix gives a particular meaning to a verb: as, *Belie*, *Bespew*, &c. Some nouns are formed into verbs, in connexion with it, which do not exist as verbs in a simple or separate state—as, *Befriend*, *Behead*, &c.; but frequently it imparts no meaning: thus, *Becalm*, to calm; *Becloud*, to cloud, &c.

*Arch*, i. e. *ARCH-OS*, chief, is employed as a prefix: *Arch-priest*, a chief-priest; *Archbishop*, a chief bishop; *Arch-rogue*, a chief or great rogue, &c.; *Arch-heretic*, a chief or remarkable heretic.

#### AFFIXES OR POSTFIXES, i. e. WORDS ADDED TO THE END OF OTHER WORDS.

##### AFFIXES OF ADJECTIVES.

We will arrange these under the following heads:

1. Simple Adjectives or Connectives: *an*, *en*, *in*, *on*, &c.; *ad*, *ed*, *id*, &c.; *ate*, *ite*, &c.; *al*, *el*, *ile*, &c.; *ar*, *er*, *ary*, &c.; *ic*, *ick*, *ig*, contr. into *y* and cor. into *ish* (*isch*, Ger.; *esco*, It.; *esque*, Fr.): *Human* from *HUMO*, now *HOMO*; *Golden*, *Frigid*, *Par-*

tial, Singular, Customary, Domestic, ‡ Frostig, now Frosty, Spanish, Waspish, Picturesque.

All these affixes which the modern have in common with the learned languages, might, as already intimated, be called *possessive* or *genitive*: thus, *Conditio hominis*, *Humana conditio*, Man's condition, the condition of man, the human condition, are all equivalent expressions.

Observe, such affixes are frequently redundant, i. e. two or more are put where one is sufficient: as *Philosophical*; *Etymological*; *Eastern*; *Western*, &c. &c., instead of philosophic, &c.

Concerning the etymology of these affixes, it is, perhaps, idle to offer a conjecture, as they are mere fragments of words: *id*, &c., seems a contraction of *EIDOS* (used adjectively), *ic* or *ik*, &c., of *EIKOS*, *Like* (which word is also employed as an adjective affix); and, perhaps, all the rest have a similar derivation; but we cannot be confident respecting them.

2. Separative or negative affixes of adjectives. We have one of this description, which answers exactly to the negative prefix *in* or *un*, viz. *less*, i. e. ‡ *Los*, i. e. *lost*, deprived of, without: as, *Witless*, *Friendless*, *Careless*; without wit, without a friend, without care: the Ger. is *los*: as, *Gottlos*, Godless; *Grundlos*, Groundless. Our present form of this affix seems to have originated (like many other modern spellings) in etymologic error; by supposing it to be the adjective *Less*, or comparative of little.

See Loose, Lose, &c., under LAXO and LUO, LUSO, in the Dictionary.

3. Diminutive affixes of adjectives. We have one of this description, viz. *ish*: as, *Sweetish*, a little sweet; *Saltish*, a little salt: *ish* is a cor. of the Greek diminutive ISK; which is in Italian, *uccio* and *uzzo*, and in Span. *ico*.

4. Augmentive adjective affixes: these are ‡ Sam, ‡ Sum, *Some*, *ful*, *ous*.

‡ Sam, ‡ Sum, now *Some*, is the Latin superlative affix, *ssim-us* or *sum-us*, i. e. SUMM-us, highest, greatest, most, much, very: *Troublesome*, *lightsome*, causing much trouble, giving much light. In Ger. this affix is *Sam*; our present spelling originated in the etymologic error of supposing it to be *some*; which still exists as a separate word, but which has an opposite meaning.

*Ful*, i. e. *Full*, requires no explanation here. *Ous*, is the French form of *Os*, (like *our* for *or*,) a Latin augmentive affix: CALAMITOS-us, *Calamitous*, having or causing much calamity.

These three affixes are equivalent though not always interchangeable; for it is not customary to put the one for the other at choice: we say *troublesome*; but *troublesful*, *troublous*, seem awkward: the old writers, indeed, took more liberty in this way.

The Latin affix *os*, is manifestly the same as *ox*, *az*, and seems to be a fragment of MAXIM-us, greatest, most, much, very.

There are some adjective affixes that cannot be

ranged under any of the above designations : as *able*, (i. e. *HABILIS*, *HABILE*—see *HABEO*,) which might be termed *potential* passive : *Teachable*, *Moveable*, *Mutable*, *MUTABILE*, &c. ; i. e. that may be taught, that may be moved. But there are instances in which it is employed as *active* rather than *passive* : *Forcible*, *Conversable*, &c., i. e. *Forceful*, that can converse. This use of the affix is not frequent; and, perhaps, it ought to be discontinued.

It is almost unnecessary to mention that our adjective *able* is the same word; only it is hardly ever applied as *passive* : we say, *able to see*, but not *able to be seen*.

*Alike*, *Like*, often contr. into *ly*, (*Lich*, *Ger.* and *Gleich*, i. e. *Ge-leich*, *Lyk*, *Dut.*,) i. e. *ALIGKI-os*, perhaps a cor. of *EIKEL-os*, *ÆQUAL-is*, *equal* : *Gentlemanlike* or *Gentlemanly*, *Friendlike*, or *Friendly*, &c., i. e., *like a gentleman*, as a friend : this is generally what is termed an adverbial termination : as, *boldly*, in a bold manner, *proudly*, in a proud manner, &c.

Horne Tooke derives *Like* from the compound *Gelyk* or *Gleich* ; but he does not attempt to inform us what *Gleich* is derived from.

We may notice the affixes *ward* and *wise* here : as in *homeward*, *backward*, *sidewise*, *longwise*, &c., in the direction of home, in the direction of the back, in the direction of the side, in the long direction or manner : *ward* is a corrup. of *VERSUS*. See *Ward*

under VERT-O; *wise* is for ‡ *wayis*, ‡ *way's*, genitive of Way, i. e. VIA.

#### AFFIXES OF NOUNS.

These are, *head* also *hood*, *dom*, *ship*, *ness*, *th*, *ty*, *tude*, *ary*, *ry*, *ment*, *men*, *mony*, *age*, *ation*, *etion*, *ition*, *otion*, *ution* and *asion*, *esion*, &c., *ant*, *ent*, *or*, *er*, *ist*, *ism*, *ling*, *lin*.

As the terminations of words are exceedingly liable to be corrupted, it is hardly possible to arrive at a satisfactory opinion concerning the derivation of many affixes: those of the nouns are particularly difficult.

The affix *head*, *hood*, (*heid*, Dut., *heit*, Ger.,) would seem at first sight the noun *head*: as if ‡ Manhead or Manhood were head man or great man; but there is so little obvious connexion between the meaning suggested by this word, whether taken literally or figuratively, and the use of *hood* as an affix in many applications, that we have conjectured the last to be either a corruption of *had*, or, what seems more probable, of *tudo*. Another form of the same affix in German is *od*, and in Welsh there is *edd* and *dod*. But whatever be the derivation of *hood*, it means exactly the same as *tudo*, *ty*, &c., i. e., state, condition: Widowhood is being a widow; falsehood is being false, or that which is false.

*Dom* (*thum*, Ger.) seems evidently a contr. of

*domain* or *dominion* : Kingdom, Popedom, Princedom, Dukedom, that which is subject to a king, &c. In such instances the affix is strictly proper ; but, like other words, it was extended to more vague applications : as *wisdom*, *freedom*, &c., i. e. being wise, free ; or the state of being *wise*, free.

*Ship*, (Schaft, Ger.,) has also occasioned much trouble. We have conjectured it might (as also *haft*, Ger.) be a corrup. of ‡ hafd, *haupt*, Ger., i. e. CAPUT ; then we have supposed it might be *have* ; again, we have thought it might be a corrup. of SUPER ; which so far as meaning is concerned, is the most likely derivation. But whatever be the derivation it evidently serves the same purpose as *hood*, *dom*, *tas*, *ty*, *tude*, &c. : as, Lordship, the domain of a Lord, the power, authority, dignity, &c., of a Lord ; Worship, ‡ Worthship, i. e. being worthy or considered worthy, honour ; whence, as a verb to worship, i. e. to honour ; worshipful, honourable, or considered full of worth, very worthy ; Courtship is the business, state, or process of courting.

The preceding affixes are not much employed and may be regarded as antique terminations ; for they are hardly *affixed* at pleasure in the present time.

The affix of most general application is *ness* (*niss*, Ger.) ; which, as well as *ezza*, It., and *esse*, Fr., seems a corrup. of ESSENTIA, essence. Almost any adjective can be converted into a noun by this affix : Round, Roundness (*Ritondo*, *Ritondezza*, It.) ; Fee-

ble, Feebleness (*Foible, Foiblesse, Fr.*); Noble, Nobleness (*Noblesse, Fr.*). So also in Ger. *Finster*, dark, *Finsterniss*, darkness.

Horne Tooke seems to have fancied that the above termination was the same as *ness* in the names of places on the sea coast: as Sheerness, Foulness, &c.; but the latter is manifestly *nose* or NASUS; and it would be difficult to discover any connexion between *nose* and the affix in question.

The affix *th* in connexion with nouns is considered by Mr. Tooke the same as the verbal affix *eth*: we have by turns supposed it might be that; or, perhaps, *the*, (what is called definite article,) or a cor. of *ty*. The last is rather our present opinion. But whatever be its derivation its use is the very same as *ty, ness, &c.*: as, *wide, width, wideness*; long, ‡ *length, length, longness*; true, truth, the same as verity, i. e. VERITAS from VERUS.

The affix *ty*, like *té, Fr., ta, It., dad, Sp.*, is a cor. of the Latin affix *tas, tat*, and Greek *tes*: as *bounty, bonté, Fr., bonta, It., bondad, Sp., BONITAS* from BONUS, good; vanity, *vanité, Fr., Vanita, It., Vanidad, Sp., VANITAS* from VAN-US, vain.

There is the same use of *tude*, i. e. *tudo, Lat.*, and in the ablative *tudine*; which is adopted by the Italian: *Magnitude, Magnitudine, It., MAGNITUDO*, from MAGNUS, great.

The termination *ary* contr. into *ry*, is properly the Latin adjective affix *aris* or *arius*: as *Actuary, Apothecary, &c., i. e. ACTUARIUS* from ACTUS; so ca-

valry, formed on † CAVALLUS, CABALLUS, a horse, a war-horse; Rivalry, formed on Rival; Pleasantry, on pleasant, &c.

The terminations *ment*, *men*, *mony*, are evidently the same affix: FRAGMENT-um, a broken part, from † FRAG-o, to break; DOCUMENT-um, that which shows, from DOC-eo, to show; Commandment what is commanded, from Command; ACUMEN, sharpness, or that which has a point, from ACU-o, to point, make sharp; PATRIMONIUM, Patrimony, what descends from a father, (PATER,) an inheritance, &c.

This affix is frequently an adverbial termination in Italian, French, and Spanish: *Importunamente*, It. and Sp., *Importunement*, Fr., importunately, &c.

The termination *age*, seems in some instances the augmentive *accio*, It., i. e. *ar*, Lat.: as *villagio*, It., village, the augmentive form of villa; *viaggio*, It., voyage of VIA, a way, a journey; *personaggio*, It., personage of PERSONA, person; foliage, *Feuillage*, Fr., of *feuille*, Fr., or *foglia*, It., FOLIUM, a leaf.

In the modern Italian, *accio* has become a contemptuous augmentive; but as it remains in the form of *aggio*, it is either neutrologistic or eulogistic.

In such instances as the following, *age* is simply a connective or possessive affix; and seems to be a corrup. of *ac*, *ic*, *ag* or *ig*, already noticed, under simple adjectives: *parsonage*, *vicarage*, *poundage*, *tonnage*, &c. In all such cases, *age* (as explained under simple connective affixes) merely means of, connected with, belonging to: *parsonage house*, is



the house of a parson ; parsonage benefice, is the benefice of a parson ; poundage custom, charge, rate, &c., is equivalent to per pound ; patronage is the power or agency of a patron.

A numerous class of verbal nouns derived from the Latin, terminate in *ation*, *acion*, *asion*, *etion*, *esion*, *ition*, *icion*, *ision*, *otion*, *osion*, *ution*, *usion*. In Italian, these terminations are *atione*, *acione*, &c., being the form of what is called the ablative singular of the Latin. When the modern Latin (i. e. the Italian) discontinued the ancient *cases*, it retained this as the only singular termination, for no other reason, perhaps, than its agreeable sound. With us, the French and the Spaniards, the final *e* is dropped : thus, commend, commendation, *commenda-zione*, It. ; complete, completion ; compose, composition, *composicion*, Sp., *composizione*, It. ; confusc, confusion, *confusione*, It.

With few exceptions, the French and the English are the same : the Italian differs from them in having the final *e* and *z*, instead of *t* : Spanish has generally *c* instead of *t*.

The last-mentioned nouns are formed on what is called the *supine*. Thus, **FACTUM**, to make or do ; **FACTIO**, (abl. **Factione**,) a making or doing ; **OCCASUM**, to fall or happen, **OCCASIO**, (abl. **OCCASIONE**,) a happening ; **INTRUSUM**, to intrude, **INTRUSIO**, (abl. **INTRUSIONE**,) an intruding or *intrusion*.

It is evident that all such words are of the same nature as our verbal nouns, terminating in *ing*, i. e.

participles put substantively: AUDITIO is the same as hearing; *Visio*, (VISIONE, *Vision*,) seeing. There can in general be no necessity, therefore, for explanation to such words, when the verbs have been explained from which they are derived.

As these verbal nouns follow the spelling of the *supine* or *participle*, they occasion some orthographic embarrassment to mere English scholars; for whose sake it would have been well, perhaps, if one consonant had been adhered to in naturalizing such words. There is no difficulty with those verbs and adjectives which we have from the Latin supine or participle: as, communicate, communication; promote, promotion; profuse, profusion; pollute, pollution; contrite, contrition; profess, profession. Of those verbs which have *d*, the nouns have *s*: deride, derision; protrude, protrusion: but those which assume another syllable terminate in *ation*; as commend, commendation, from COMMENDATUM.

Nouns terminating in *ant* and *ent* are Latin participles: as, servant, from SERVO; patent, from PATEO, &c. In these and in nouns generally adopted entire from the Latin, we, as well as our neighbours, have what is in that language called the ablative case.

The termination *or* changed into *er*, *ar*, and in French *eur*, is generally applied to indicate an agent: *Creator*, he who creates; *lover*, one that loves; *liar*, one that lies; *beggar*, one that begs; AMATOR, *Amateur*, Fr. a lover. In Latin, *or* like *os* is merely

a masculine sign or affix : as *amor*, love, as well as *amator*, lover, *honor* or *honos*. The French have changed *or* into *eur*, when an agent is indicated, and into *our* when agency, state, quality, &c., are indicated ; and Johnson has followed in this as in several other instances, the French mode of spelling : as, labour, honour, favour, instead of labor, honor, favor.

The termination *ist* adopted from Greek, answers exactly to *er*, i. e. *or* from the Latin : as, reformer or reformist ; etymologer or etymologist. One of these seems more fit and graceful in some connexions than the other : *er* having been longer and more generally used does better in connexion with vernacular words : reformer is better than reformist ; but *etymologist* seems better than *etymologer* ; *geographer* again seems more graceful than *geographist*. Much in all such cases depends on custom ; which has mighty sway over our mental and moral habits.

The adjective affix *an* or *ian*, is employed in connexion with many nouns ending in *io*, to form a new noun indicating an agent : as, from music, musician ; logic, logician ; optics, optician ; metaphysics, metaphysician.

The Latin termination *ura*, in French and English *ure*, frequently occurs : as creature from create ; picture from PICTUM, PINGO to paint.

The Latin termination *tia* is changed into *ice*, *ce*,

*cy*: as, MAL-*us*, MALITIA, *Malice*; FREQUENS, Frequent, FREQUENTIA, *Frequency*; PRÆVALENTIA, *Prevalence*.

The Greek termination *ism*, is frequently appended to words which are not of Greek extraction: as, Calvinism, the doctrinal system of Calvin; Gallicism, a Gallic or French idiom; *vulgarism*, a vulgar expression; *truism*, an obvious or a trite, *true* remark.

Many verbal nouns (nouns formed from verbs) terminate in *ence*, i. e. *entia*, Lat.; as, *providence*, contr. into *prudence*, foreseeing; providing, taking care of; *credence*, believing; *precedence*, preceding, &c. All such words answer exactly to our own participles employed as nouns: as, hearing, seeing, smelling.

We have noticed *age* as properly an augmentive in such words as *village*, *personage*, &c.: *on*, (*one*, It.,) *oon*, is also an augmentive: as, *matron*, *patron*, MATRONA, PATRONUS; formed on MATER, PATER; *saloon*, *salon*, Fr., *Salone*, It., a great hall, from *Sala*, It., *Salle*, Fr., cor. of AULA, a *hall*. This Latin affix, which is eulogistic as well as augmentive, seems to be a contr. of BONUS: thus, PATER-BONUS; MATER-BONA.

We, like the French, have not any vernacular augmentive affix of nouns: such words as *village*, *salon*, &c., were borrowed in the compound state from the Italians.

Most of the diminutive affixes of nouns are now

obsolete, though they yet remain as inseparable terminations in many words.

The Latin diminutive affix is *uncul* contr. into *cul*, *ull*, *ul*, *ell*, *el*, &c., and in Italian *ello*, in Spanish *uelo*, *illo* : as PARTICULA, *particle*, (from PARS, PART-is,) a small *part* ; MORSIUNCULA, contr. into morsel, (from MORSUS, a bite,) a little bite, a snap ; BĒSTIOLA, cor. into *beetle*, a little beast or creature ; SEDICULA, contr. into SEDILE, (from SEDES, a seat,) cor. into *saddle*, *settle*, *stool*. Thus a great number of words terminating in *l* or *le* are properly diminutives : many of them have been adopted directly from the Latin ; many have been received through the French or Italian.

The above affix *uncul*, seems a contraction of UN-CIALIS, of an *inch*, of the magnitude of an *inch* ; which is equivalent to small, little.

The Italian has two other diminutives, viz. *étto* (*ette*, Fr., *et*, Eng., *ito*, Sp.) and *ino* ; which are found in many words : as pocket, diminutive of *poke*, *pouch*, *poche*, Fr. ; ballot, *ballotte*, Fr., *pallotta*, It., of *ball*, *balle*, Fr., *palla*, It. ; bullet, *boulet*, Fr., of *boule*, Fr., another form of *balle* : kitten, *Gattino*, It., dim. of Cat, *Gatto*, It., *Chat*, Fr.

The French formerly employed the diminutives at pleasure like the Italians and Spaniards, but they have long disused them ; and this of course is a subject of boasting with Voltaire, in reply to the Italian critics who accused the French of having no

diminutives. We had them formerly, says Voltaire ; but they possessed not sufficient dignity for the noble language of the Bourdaloues and Massillons ! !

It will, perhaps, flatter the French to remark that we probably discontinued the use of diminutives, because they set us the example.

Most of the diminutive terminations which we have traceable to the Italian, were derived through the French.

We have noticed *ish*, i. e. *uccio*, It., *ico*, Sp., *isk*, Greek, under Adjective Affixes : as, in *sweetish*, *brackish*, *saltish*, &c. We had it formerly *ock*, *uck*, (as it still exists in Scotland : as, *beastock*, contr. into *beasty*, a little beast,) as in *hillock* ; a little *hill*.

As *ish*, *ock*, *ico*, Sp., *uccio*, It., &c., seem to be *isk*, Gr. ; so, perhaps, *et*, *etto*, It., is the Greek adjective ETTON or HETTON, a contr. of ELATTON also ELASSON ; whence, seemingly, our † *lyt*, *little* and *less*, as also *lad*, *lass*.

We have also as diminutive affixes *kin*, *chen*, Ger., and *lin*, *ling*, *lein*, Ger. : as, *manikin*, *männchen* and *manlein*, Ger., little man ; *lambkin*, *lammchen*, Ger., little lamb ; *goslin*, *ganschen*, Ger., a little goose ; *lordling*, contr. into *lording*, *lordchen*, Ger., a little or petty lord. Of all the diminutives of nouns, *ling* is the only one which is not quite obsolete ; and even this is hardly applied *ad libitum* : and having become like the Italian *uccio*, *uzzo*, *ecciuolo*, exceedingly contemptuous, we cannot regret its departure.

Both *kin* or *chen* and *lin*, *ling*, or *lein*, are evidently contractions of *klein*, (Ger.,) little.

#### AFFIXES OF VERBS.

Here, to avoid repetition, we do not intend to notice those terminations already treated of, such as *est*, *eth*, *es*, *s*, *ing*, *ed*, and the irregularities of what is called the substantive verb. The affixes now in view are those immovable terminations which we have in many verbs, viz. *en*, *er*, *ize*, *fy*, *ish*: *en* is the obsolete sign of what is commonly called the infinitive mood, and is manifestly the same as the Greek *ein*: as PHILEIN, ‡ *loven*, to love: having been once connected with many verbs it was considered a fixture, and therefore remains, though it adds no meaning; as, slacken, to slack, blacken, to black, &c. Here, as in other instances, custom has the effect of making us fancy that *en* gives meaning or force or dignity; but if we had been more used to slack, black, &c., than to slacken, blacken, the case would have been reversed. However, as *en* causes no inconvenience, it may remain; especially as some words (after we have been so long used to it) would seem exceedingly awkward or unmeaning without it: as, *enliven*, *brighten*, *frighten*.

The verbal termination *ize* is adopted from Greek: as, BAPTIZE, to immerse; a new verb formed on BAPTO, to dip or *bathe*; liberalize, to render liberal; temporize, to suit the times (*tempora*); bru-

talize, to render brutal; demoralize, to render immoral; authorize, to give authority to, &c.

The verbal termination *er*, is (like *en* in Saxon and German, and *ein* in Greek) the French, Italian, Spanish and Latin affix of what is commonly called the infinitive mood: as, BATUO, *Beat*, BATUERE, cor. into *Battere*, It., *Battre*, Fr., *Batir*, Sp., *batter*; SPUTO, to *spit*, spout, SPUTARE, *sputter*, cor. into *spurt*, spirt. We have many verbs formed upon nouns by assuming this affix: as, *pester*, from *pest*; *flatter*, (and Fr.,) from FLATUS, &c.

Where we have duplicates of the same verb as *beat* (BATU-O) and *batter* (BATUERE), the latter form is generally augmentive: *batter*, is to beat much or forcibly; *sputter*, is to spit much or forcibly.

The verbal termination *ish*, is a cor. of *is*, the first person present indicative, of the same verbs in French: as, Flourish, Banish, Garnish, (cor. into Furnish,) &c., in French, *Fleuris*, *Bannis*, *Garnis*, &c. The *s* is now silent in French; but it was not silent when such words were adopted into the English language; and as *oui* was anciently *ouis*, we have it corrupted into *yes*.

A verbal affix of very general use is *fy*, i. e. FIO, or rather FACIO, to make: as, *rectify*, to make RECTUM or right; *beautify*, to make beautiful; *brutify*, to make a brute, i. e. of a human being. In this, as in so many other cases, there is a less proper application of *fy*, which tends to produce equivocal



calness : as, *verify*, *justify*, &c., which do not mean to make *true*, to make *just* ; but to prove true, to prove just.

---

### GRAMMAR.

THIS term now so much extended beyond its original import is generally defined, The art of speaking and writing a language with propriety. Without any regard to the etymology of the word, (for which the reader is referred to the Dictionary,) we are willing to take this as the present and established signification ; but as the noun *propriety* is one of those vague entities which abound so much in literature, we will take the liberty of distinguishing English Grammar into two kinds, viz. Rational and Arbitrary. The first is intelligible and useful : the last is a jumble of unintelligibleness and absurdity in theory ; and it is attended with no utility but much inconvenience and trouble in practice. The cause of this inconvenience and trouble is, that arbitrary rules of speech are imposed, which have a similar effect as fetters or cumbrous armour. The reason of the unintelligibleness and absurdity of grammar as set forth by the grammatists, is their misty notion of *propriety* ; which they one while consider as identical with reason, and another while as identical with custom. They would unite these two into a beautiful system ; which is about as practicable as to

amalgamate the most incoherent bodies. They are not content with saying, one mode of speech is *proper*, because it is agreeable to the custom of the best writers ; and another is *improper*, because it is contrary to approved precedent. This would be intelligible doctrine, and it is the only *rationale* of arbitrary grammar.

---

#### RATIONAL GRAMMAR OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

THIS is presented chiefly for the sake of contrast to arbitrary grammar ; and after what has been already written, it is hardly necessary to show how widely different the one is from the other. It must be remarked, that Rational Grammar is a *desideratum* ; as the grammatic rules of every language are, in many respects, absurd, being calculated to render it not more but less fit for its professed purpose. Happily, though the principle of utility has been little regarded, and though there has been much blind legislation to establish a despotic system of syntactic propriety, our language is yet one of the simplest and freest in the world ; and, with a very moderate reform, might be wholly disincumbered from all grammatic difficulty. We are surely as competent to simplify and improve our grammar, as to simplify and improve our machinery : and we have only to lay aside one of the double forms of the pronouns or to agree that either form shall be proper in

any position ; to substitute *Be* as a regular verb for that jumble of anomaly now employed ; to throw away the useless terminations *est, eth, es, or s,* (appended to verbs in connexion with thou and he, &c.,) and to disallow all anomalies of verbs, nouns, and adjectives.

The only imaginable objection to such grammatic improvement is, that it would appear strange : so is every thing new, however excellent, till we become used to it. Every new fashion seems odd, if not ridiculous, when first introduced ; but it soon appears more excellent than that which it supersedes. We have only to set up an enlightened and useful custom in the room of the old, absurd, and inconvenient grammatic usage, and it will immediately begin to acquire the venerable qualities of the approved, established, and ancient form of speech ; and the oldest institutions and customs were once new.

If it be asked, What is the amount of utility in the proposed alteration ? That is considerable in every view of the question. It is important to have a sensible instead of a senseless kind of grammar ; one, for which satisfactory reasons can be assigned to youths and foreigners. It is of considerable utility to have an easy instead of a difficult kind of syntactic propriety ; for with the former, the writer or speaker is enabled to direct his whole consideration to the justness of his thoughts and the meaning of his words ; but a complicated syntax distracts his attention ; and having to accomplish the two operations

of good sense and good grammar at one and the same moment, the consequence frequently is, that both are badly performed. We sometimes find good sense expressed in bad grammar ; and we often find good grammar garnishing bad sense : nay, even bad composition is often dressed up in good grammar ; and good composition often appears in the dishabille of faulty grammar.

We are willing to subscribe to the motto assumed by Lindley Murray, from the Lectures of Dr. Blair : “ They who are learning to compose and arrange their sentences with *accuracy* and order, are learning at the same time to think with accuracy and order ;” as also to another sentence of the same rhetorician : “ The study of arranging and expressing our thoughts with *propriety*, teaches to think as well as to speak accurately.” But how are we to understand the nouns *accuracy* and *propriety* in all such propositions ? If they mean what is commonly called grammatic propriety and accuracy, such as saying, *thou lovest*, instead of *thou love* ; *we were*, instead of *we was*, &c. ; there is just as little connexion between such etiquette and learning to think accurately or to express thought accurately, i. e. definitely, as there is between learning to bow and learning to reason. Logical accuracy of expression is of the highest importance ; and this is the proper object of rational grammar : but this is so far from being identical with arbitrary grammar, that the one is often at variance with the other.

### ARBITRARY GRAMMAR.

THE reader is now sufficiently aware of the true character of arbitrary grammar. It was not dictated by reason, and therefore cannot be referred to any rational principles. But though we wish to see it discarded by a general disuse of all anomalies and unmeaning terminations, and changes of verbs and pronouns, yet such reform must be effected (if ever effected) by the influential members of the literary world. All others must be content with established usage. They must endeavour to speak and write grammatically, merely to avoid the imputation of ignorance and illiterateness. In this, as in so many other things, we must submit to bondage, for we are not free to follow reason—unless we have sufficient hardihood to set public opinion at defiance.

For the use of those who must prudently comply with the prescribed etiquette, we shall endeavour to present it in as intelligible a form, and in as small a compass, as possible.

### THE GRAMMAR OF PRONOUNS.

The words called Pronouns are, I, Me, Thou, Thee, He, Him, She, Her, It, We, Us, You or Ye, They, Them, Who, Whom, Which, This, These, That, Those.

There can be no mistake respecting the meaning of these words, with any persons who have heard

them pronounced a few times in the common course of speech: *I*, is perceived to indicate the same person as *Me*, *Thou* as *Thee*, *He* as *Him*, &c.; but as these double forms of the same words had *necessarily*, in Latin, different applications, the English grammatists thought a similar diversity of application *proper* in the English language; and they have succeeded in making a useless and embarrassing distinction an essential part of arbitrary grammar. Grammatic propriety, as to the pronouns, may be included in the following particulars.

#### THE DOUBLE FORMS OF PRONOUNS.

These we will range in two classes:

1. *I*, *Thou*, *He*, *She*, *Who*, *We*, *They*.
2. *Me*, *Thee*, *Him*, *Her*, *Whom*, *Us*, *Them*.

[*Ye* or *You*, *It*, *Which*, *That*, *This*, &c., are not included in the above enumeration; because, fortunately, they have but one form.]

Those of the first class are called, by grammarians, *nominatives*, or are said to be in the *nominative case*: those in the second class are called *objectives*, or are said to be in the *objective case*: but we shall, for the sake of intelligibleness, call the one (*I*, *Thou*, *He*, *She*, &c.) the *first form*; and the other (*Me*, *Thee*, *Him*, &c.) the *second form* of the pronoun. There is a peculiar manner of employing the pronouns, for which it is not easy to give any rule perfectly accurate. The nearest approach to accuracy seems this: When any one of the words commonly

called pronouns, is employed to indicate an agent, it is put in the *first form*; and when it is employed to indicate an object of some action, it is put in the *second form*. Thus: I love thee; thou lovest me; he loves her; she loves him; they love us; we love them; the man whom she loves is the person who loves her. These are all examples of proper grammar, and when inverted they present instances of improper grammar: *Me* love *thou*; *thee* lovest *I*; *him* loves *she*; *her* loves *he*; *them* love *me*; *us* love *they*; the man *who* *her* loves is the person *whom* loves *she*.

Another approximation to accuracy, as a general rule, might be put thus: When the pronoun stands before the verb it is put in the *first form*; when it stands after the verb it is put in the *second form*: as, I see them, they see us, &c. This is the usual, but not the invariable, order of composition in the English language, and therefore the above would not hold as a universal rule; for in such instances as the following, the *second form* of the pronoun, or what is called the objective case, stands before the verb: Whom seek ye? He whom ye seek. Here, in both cases, *whom* is the object of the verb seek, though it stands before it. Nor is the other imperfect rule less objectionable, viz. when the pronoun denotes an agent, it is in the *first form* or nominative case, and when it denotes the object of an action, it is in the *second form* or objective case; for by employing the verb in what is called the passive instead

of the active voice, the grammatic relation of agent and object is wholly changed, as is evident in the following examples: Thou art loved by me; I am loved by thee; she is loved by him: not *thee* art loved by *I*, &c.

It is impossible to give accurate and adequate rules concerning arbitrary grammar, which can never be reduced to rational principles; for "what reason did not dictate, reason can never explain."

Perhaps the most unobjectionable rule that can be given is the following: A pronoun is always in the *first form* or nominative *case*, except first, when it is the object of a verb active or transitive: as, you love *him*, *whom* I hate; he dreads *us*, but despises *them*; we, as well as they, disregard *him*, but respect *her*, &c. In these instances the pronouns *him*, *whom*, *them*, *us*, are, in the language of grammarians, governed by the active verbs, (*love*, *hate*, *dreads*, &c.) in the accusative or objective case. There is neither much sense nor intelligibleness in such terms; but every reader, however little acquainted with the subject before, must now understand what is meant by the position, Every pronoun is in the *first form* or nominative *case*, except first, when the object of a verb active. But there is a second exception, viz. when a pronoun is preceded by any of those words called prepositions; or (to adopt the common grammatic phraseology) when the pronoun is governed by a preposition.

The words called prepositions are, *of*, *to*, *from*,



over, through, above, for, by, in, below, beneath, under, into, at, with, before, after, behind, within, without, up, beyond, about, near, down, on, upon, off, against, among, between, &c.

When these words come immediately before any pronoun, it is to be put in the *second form*, called also oblique case, objective case, accusative case : as, I went with *them*, from *him* to *her*, &c. &c.: not, I went with *they*, from *he* to *she*, &c.

The most usual grammatic improprieties as to the pronouns, consist in putting *me* for *I*, *him* for *he*, *her* for *she*, *them* for *they*, &c., in the following manner : “ Who is there ? ” “ Me,” instead of *I*. May William and *me* go to London ? It should be William and *I*. *Them* and *us* went out together ; *they* and *we* went out together. Him and her are well matched ; *he* and *she* are well matched.

There is hardly a possibility of grammatic impropriety in the application of *he*, *she*, *it* ; but very illiterate persons are apt to employ *he* instead of *it*, when speaking of objects devoid of sex, in the following manner : This knife is not sharp, *he* is very blunt, &c.

When *he* or *she* is applied to objects devoid of sex, respect must be paid to established usage. The sun must be spoken of as *he*, the moon as *she*, &c. It is absurd to attempt to assign any rational principle for this custom, which varies among different nations ; for with the Anglo-Saxons, the sun was spoken of as *she* and the moon as *he*. We, in this matter, follow

the Latins, who followed the Greeks, who probably followed the Egyptians, who perhaps imitated the Babylonians; for much of the general agreement, or *common consent*, of nations and languages, is referrible, not to reason, but to custom founded on imitation.

Illiterate persons very frequently employ *them* instead of *these* or *those*: thus, *Them* men were very noisy; it should be, *those* men were very noisy: Hand me *them* books,—*those* books.

There is often a departure from propriety in changing from one person and number to another: thus, Every man knows *their own* affairs best; it ought to be, Every man knows *his* own affairs best. Can any one be certain, at *their* first entrance on life, that *they* shall be always successful; it should be *his* and *he*.

The grammatists have succeeded in establishing a distinction between *who* and *which*: the former is to be employed only when speaking of persons: as, the man who came, the woman who came, the men who are, the buds which are, the trees which grow, &c.; not the man *which* was, &c., the birds *who* are, &c. Fortunately *that* is equally free from change to denote nominative and accusative, and from any particular manner of application. We can say, the man that was here, the bird that sings, &c.

Some of the grammatists have endeavoured to interdict the use of *whose*, more properly *who's*, except in connexion with a person, like *who* and *whom*:

but they have not succeeded. We can say, the bird whose leg was hurt, as well as the man whose leg was hurt.

Persons are apt, without care, to blunder in applying *this* and *these*, *that* and *those*: as, this twelvemonth, instead of these twelvemonths: those or these kind of people, instead of that or this kind of people.

There is hardly any difference between the application of *this* with its plural *these*, and *that* with its plural *those*. If two objects, or sets of objects, be referred to, *this* and *these* are applied to the nearer, in time, place, or reference; *that* and *those* are applied to the more distant: thus, *This* is a more irksome part of the author's task than *that* which led him to treat of more intellectual topics: *These* are the petty, unmeaning, and useless distinctions of arbitrary grammar now under consideration; but *those* inquiries to which, in a former part of this work, he directed the attention of the reader, are of a loftier character.

---

#### THE GRAMMAR OF VERBS.

WE must exhibit the combinations, or what grammarians call the conjugations of verbs, beginning with that jumble of anomalous incoherence, or of dissimilar parts, commonly designated the substantive or neuter verb *To be*.

I am.		We	
Thou art.		Ye or You	
He	}	They	}
She		These	
It		Men	
John		Birds,	
Man,		&c.	
&c.	is.		are.

The above is denominated, by grammatists, the Present Tense, Indicative Mood.

I	}		}
He		We	
She		Ye or You	
It		They	
Man,		These	
&c.	was.	Men	
		Birds,	
Thou wast.		&c.	were.

The above is called, by some grammatists, the Imperfect Tense ; by others, the Past Tense.

The other parts of what is called the substantive verb, are, Be, Being, Been ; as, I shall be, I have been, &c.

It is hardly possible for any mistake to happen in these parts, except, perhaps, that children and foreigners would be naturally induced by analogy, (unless prevented by the force of custom,) to say, I have beed, having beed, &c., instead of, I have been, having been.

We have noticed how simple the substantive verb

would be, if rendered regular, by discarding all such dissimilar parts as, *am, is, are, was, were*: thus, I *be*, &c., I *beed*, &c., I have *beed, being, having beed*. But arbitrary grammar prohibits such reasonable simplicity and utility.

When directly preceded by *let, may, might, can, could, will, would, shall, should*, Be is unchanged; thus, Let me be, let him be; I may be, he may be; I might be, he might be; I can be, I could be; I will, shall, would, or should be, &c.

The grammatists have conferred on such combinations a number of high-sounding, but insignificant or absurd designations; as, Imperative Mood, Potential Mood, &c. &c.

When the substantive verb is immediately preceded by If, (§ Gif, i. e. Give,) Though, Suppose, Grant, (or Supposing, &c.,) and other similar terms, which usually indicate uncertainty or contingency, established usage is so various as to set rules at defiance: thus,

If	}	If I be, or If I am;
Though,		If thou be, or If thou art;
&c.		If he be, or If he is,
		&c.

If I was, or If I were;  
 If thou wast, or If thou wert;  
 If he was, or If he were,  
 &c.

Present grammatic usage leans more to *If I were*

than *If I was*, and to *If he were* than *If he was*; but, concerning the distinction between Indicative and Subjunctive, grammatists are as much divided as custom is: and, according to the old doggrel couplet,

When doctors disagree  
Disciples are free.

The following words, called Auxiliary Verbs, have no change of termination; except in connexion with Thou: thus,

- ✓ I may, thou mayest, he may, &c.
- ✓ I might, thou mightest, he might, &c.
- I can, thou canst, he can, &c.
- ✓ I will, thou wilt, he will, &c.
- I shall, thou shalt, he shall, &c.

Wilt and shalt are contractions of *willest*, *shallest*; as would, should, are of *willed*, *shalled*, &c.

In all the combinations of *may*, *can*, &c., (with the exception of what is called the second person singular,) there is as much grammatic simplicity as can be wished; for there are no useless and embarrassing inflections or changes: thus,

I	{	may	}	be.
He		can		
We		shall		
&c.		will		
		could		
		should		
		might		

I	1	may	} love.
He	2	can	
We	3	will	
You	4	shall	
They	5	could	
&c.	6	would	
		should	
		might	

The verb *Have*, so much used in connexion with other verbs, is, owing to contraction, of a very irregular form: thus,

I have, Thou hast, (contr. of *haves*,) He hath, or has, contr. of *haveth*, or haves, We, Ye or You, They, &c., have.

The above is commonly called the **Present Tense**.

I	} had (contr. of <i>haved</i> ), Thou <i>hadst</i> .
He	
We	
&c.	

The above is called, by some, the **Imperfect**, by others, the **Past Tense**. There is another combination, or reduplication, of the same word, called **Pluperfect Tense**.

I	} have had: Thou hast had.
We	
You	
They	
He	} hath, or has had.
She	
It, &c.	

*To have* is called the Infinitive Mood; *Having* is called Present Participle; *Had* is called, by some, the Past Participle; by others, the Perfect Participle.

*Do* is also frequently employed in connexion with other verbs; and, in what is called the past tense, † *Doed*, is now contracted into *Did*:

I do, thou dost, he doth, or does; We, &c., do.

I did, thou didst, he did, we did, &c.

What is denominated a Regular Verb is combined with nouns and pronouns in the following manner:

I	}	train, or do train.
We		
You or Ye		
They		
These		
Men		
&c.		

Thou trainest, or dost train.

He	}	trains, or does train.
She		
It		
Man		
&c.		

This is commonly called Present Tense, Indicative Mood.

I	}	trained, or did train.
He		
She		
&c.		



We  
 You  
 They  
 &c.

} trained, or did train.

Thou trainedst, or didst train.

This is commonly called either the Imperfect or the Past Tense, Indicative Mood.

*I have trained, &c.*, is called the Perfect Tense.

*I had trained, &c.*, is called the Pluperfect Tense.

*I shall or will train, &c.*, is called the first future tense.

*I shall or will have trained, &c.*, is called the second future tense.

*To train* is called Infinitive Mood. Training is called Present Participle.

*Trained* is called Past Participle, or Passive Participle. But these designations are as useless, for any practical purpose, as they are unmeaning or false or absurd.

By connecting the past participle of an active or transitive verb, with the substantive verb, what grammatists term the passive voice is formed: thus,

*I am trained, &c. I was trained, &c. I have been trained, &c. I had been trained, &c. I will or shall be trained, &c. &c. &c. If I am or be trained, &c. I may be trained, &c. &c. &c.*

It is wholly unnecessary to exhibit the verbs more fully. The reader will clearly perceive how the various combinations are formed.

All those verbs which do not admit of being com-

bined with the substantive verb, are called *intransitive* or *neuter*: such as, *sit, stand, lie, sleep, &c.* We can say, I am trained, loved, watched, &c.; but we do not say, I am *sat, stood, slept, &c.*

One grammatic distinction of verbs, therefore, is into *active* and *neuter*, or *transitive* and *intransitive*: the former, (as already noticed,) when acting upon the pronouns, put them in what is called the objective case: thus, I love *him*, not I love *he*; he loves *me*, not he loves *I*.

A certain number of verbs are called irregular, because they do not assume *ed*, for what are called the *past tense* and *perfect participle*, like, I love, I loved, I have loved. Thus, according to custom, we must not say, I begin, I *beginned*, I have *beginned*; but, I began, I have begun.

The following is a list of the irregular verbs:

1. Those which admit of no change: (as, I *put*, I have *put*;) Put, Cost, Beat, (sometimes *beaten* is employed as the participle; as, he is *beaten*,) Burst, Cast, Cut, Hit, Hurt, Let, Rid, Set, Shed, Shut, Split, Sweat, Read.

2. Such as have *one* anomalous termination: as, Abide, Abode; Sell, Sold (corrup. of *selled*); Beseech, Besought; Bind, Bound; Bleed, Bled; Breed, Bred; Bring, Brought; Buy, Bought; Catch, Caught; Cling, Clung; Creep, Crept; Dig, Dug; Feed, Fed; Feel, Felt; Fight, Fought; Find, Found; Flee, Fled; Fling, Flung; Get, Got; Gild, Gilt (also regular); Gird, Girt (R.); Grind, Ground;

Have, Had (contr. of *Haved*); Hang, Hung; also Hanged, or regular; Hear, Heard (contr. of *Hear-ed*); Held, Hold; Keep, Kept (contr. of *Keeped*); Lay, Laid (contr. of *Layed*); Lead, Led; Leave, Left; Lend, Lent; Lose, Lost; Make, Made; Meet, Met; Pay, Paid (contr. of *Payed*); Say, Said (contr. of *Sayed*); Seek, Sought; Send, Sent; Shoe, Shod; Shoot, Shot; Shrink, Shrunk; Sing, Sung; Sink, Sunk; Sit, Sat; Sleep, Slept; Sling, Slung; Slink, Slunk; Speed, Sped; Spend, Spent; Spill, Spilt, also Spilled; Spin, Spun; Stand, Stood; Stick, Stuck; Sting, Stung; Stink, Stunk; String, Strung; Swing, Swung; Teach, Taught; Tell, Told (contr. of *Telled*); Think, Thought; Weep, Wept.

3. Those which have two or more anomalous terminations: as, I begin, I began, I have begun; Begin, Began, Begun; Know, Knew, Known; Rise, Rose, Risen; Arise, Arose, Arisen; Blow, Blew, Blown; Awake, Awoke (also Awaked), Awaken; Bear (*to bring forth*), Bare, Bore; Bear (*to carry*), Bore, Borne; Begin, Began, Begun; Bid, Bade, also Bad and Bid, Bidden, also Bid; Break, Broke, Broken; Choose, Chose, Chosen; Cleave, Clove or Cleft, Cloven or Cleft; Come, Came, Come; Dare, Durst, Dared; Do, Did, Done; Draw, Drew, Drawn; Drive, Drove, Driven; Drink, Drank, Drunk; Eat, Ate, Eaten; Fall, Fell, Fallen; Fly, Flew, Flown; Forsake, Forsook, Forsaken; Freeze, Froze, Frozen; Give, Gave, Given; Go, Went, Gone; Grow, Grew, Grown; Knew, Know, Known;

Ring, Rang, or Rung; Run, Ran, Run; See, Saw, Seen; Shake, Shook, Shaken; Slay, Slew, Slain; Slide, Slid, Slidden; Smite, Smote, Smitten; Speak, Spoke, Spoken; Spit, Spat, Spit or Splitten; Spring, Sprang, Sprung; Steel, Stole, Stolen; Stride, Strode or Strid, Stridden; Strive, Strove, Striven; Swear, Swore, Sworn; Swim, Swam, Swum; Take, Took, Taken; Tear, Tore, Torn; Throw, Threw, Thrown; Tread, Trod, Trodden; Wear, Wore, Worn; Weave, Wove, Woven; Write, Wrote, Written.

The reader may compare these irregular verbs with the exhibition of them in a former part of the work, where it is proposed to render them regular.

Pronouns and nouns, when combined with verbs, are commonly distinguished into *number* and *person*: thus,

*I am*, first person singular.

*Thou art*, second person singular.

He	}	<i>is</i> , third person singular.
She		
It		
Man		
&c.		

*We are*, first person plural.

*Ye or You are*, second person plural.

They	}	<i>are</i> , third person plural.
These		
Men		
&c.		

*Thou* is obsolete, except in prayer and among the

Quakers, and in jocular or contemptuous speech ; for instead of saying thou art, thou mayest, thou lovest, &c., when addressing one person we say, you are, you may, you love. But in prayer to God we say, thou art, thou mayest, thou wast, thou lovest, &c.

---

#### DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE SUBSTANTIVE VERB.

UNGRAMMATIC people are apt to say, I be, Thou be, He be, We be, You be, They be ; instead of, I am, Thou art, He is, We are, You are, They are.

There is seldom any mistake made by persons who are at all accustomed to grammatic language except in the *third person* ; in which the greatest grammatic proficients are apt to blunder, particularly in extemporaneous speaking, when their sentences are long and intricate ; employing *is* for *are* and *are* for *is*, and *was* for *were*, or *were* for *was*.

Grammatic etiquette admits of this plain rule.

When one object is spoken of, *is* for the *present*, and *was* for the *past*, must be employed : when two or more objects are spoken of, *are* for the *present*, and *were* for the *past*, must be employed. Thus,

Man *is* a rational creature : he *is* the natural lord of the lower animals, which *are* commonly called irrational ; but he *is* mortal as well as they *are*, and some of them *are* longer lived than he *is*. Plato and Aristotle *are* two of the most ancient philosophers whose writings *are* extant ; but neither the one nor

the other *is* to be compared with some modern philosophers.

Some persons blunder by using *were* instead of *was* : thus, I *were* at London yesterday, he *were* in the country last week, for, I *was* in London yesterday, he *was* in the country last week. But the most common grammatic error is in employing *was* instead of *were* : as, we *was* there, you *was* there, they *was* there, for we *were*, you *were*, they *were*.

The following are instances of grammatic inaccuracy : the improper words are put in Italics.

*Was* we wrong? *Was* you there? *Was* they here? *Was* the ancients well acquainted with science? *Was* Plato and Aristotle truly great philosophers? There *is* many authors in the present time. There *are* some kind of writings which *is* wholly destitute of merit when tried by the test of utility; which *are* the true standard of excellence. The mechanism of clocks and watches *were* wholly unknown a few centuries ago. Folly and vice *is* often united. There *was* more equivocators than one.

The substantive verb being of frequent recurrence, the grammatic learner should practise much upon it to acquire a correct habit ; keeping this obvious principle steadily in view as to the third person, viz. When one object is spoken of, *is* or *was*, not *are* or *were*, must be used : when two or more objects are spoken of, *are* or *were*, not *is* or *was*, must be used ; i. e. when the *nominative* to the verb is singular, *is*

and *was* must be employed ; but when the nominative is plural, *are* and *were* must be employed.

The following are examples of false grammar.

The smiles of counterfeit friendship *is* to be suspected ; it should be, *are* to be suspected. The number of the inhabitants of Great Britain *are* greatly increased of late years ; *is* greatly increased. Nothing but vain and foolish pursuits *are* agreeable to some persons—*is* agreeable. There *is* many occasions in life in which silence and reserve *is* true wisdom ; it should be *are*. There *are* many an occasion in life in which silence or reserve *are* true wisdom ; it should be *is* ; because many an occasion *is* one entity or a singular nominative ; as, also, silence or reserve ; for every disconnective word (*neither*, *nor*, *either*, *or*, &c.) has just the opposite effect of a connective word, such as *and*. The business that related to ecclesiastical meetings, matters, and persons, *were* to be ordered according to the king's direction, —*was*. The affairs belonging to the church, *was* to be ordered by the king, —*were*. In him *was* happily blended true dignity and affability, —*were*. In him *were* happily blended true dignity with affability, —*was*. The conjunction *and* connects two or more singular nouns or pronouns into a plural nominative ; but *with*, *besides*, *as well as*, and such words do not connect two or more singular nouns and pronouns into a plural nominative. The support of so many of his relations *were* a heavy tax upon his industry, —

*was*. The support of his mother and the expense of his sister *was* a heavy tax upon his industry,—*were*. The support of his mother with the expense of his sister *were* a heavy tax on his industry,—*was*. What is wisdom and virtue to the sons of folly? Reconciliation was offered on terms as moderate as *was* consistent with a permanent union. Not one of all these sons of folly *are* happy. And the fame of his person and of his wonderful actions *were* diffused abroad. The variety of the productions of genius, like those of art, *are* without limit. To live soberly, righteously, and piously, *are* required of all men: here, *to live*, (not soberly, righteously, and piously,) is the nominative to the verb. To be of a pure and humble mind, to exercise benevolence, to cultivate piety, *is* the sure means of becoming peaceful and happy. Here there are three distinct entities spoken of or enumerated in the nominative to the verb, and, therefore, not *is* but *are* should be used.

---

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE WORDS CALLED  
AUXILIARIES OR HELPING VERBS.

THESE are, May, Might, Can, Could, Will, Would, Shall, Should; and, fortunately, they have no change of termination except that they assume *st* in connexion with *thou*: thus, I may, Thou mayst, He may, &c.: will and shall, have, instead of *willest*, *shallest*, wilt and shalt.



All, therefore, that the grammatic learner has to remember in using these words is to put *st* with *thou* : thus, Thou mayst train, thou mightst train, thou canst train, thou couldst train, thou wilt train, thou shalt train, thou shouldst train.

*Do* is frequently employed as an auxiliary and changes thus : I do, thou doest or dost, he doeth, or *doth* or does, we, you, they, &c., do ; I did, thou didst, he did, we did, &c. ; I have done, thou hast done, &c.

Here all you have to remember, is to put *est* or *st* with thou, and *eth* or *es* with he, she, it, or any one object in the third person present : in the past tense, did remains unchanged, except that *st* is added after thou.

Children and foreigners, following analogy, naturally say, I do, we do, &c. ; I doed, he doed, we doed, &c., I have doed, &c. ; instead of which they must learn to say and write, I do, thou dost, he doth or does, &c. ; we did, thou didst, &c. ; I have done, &c.

*Have* is also, with another verb, considered auxiliary, and is similarly contracted : thus, I have, we have, you have, they have, thou hast, he hath or has ; I had, thou hadst, he had, we had, &c.

Here, again, you have only to remember to say or write, thou hast, he hath or has, thou hadst ; in all the other combinations *have* and *had* undergo no change.

The termination *eth* or *th* is now almost obsolete ;

*es* or *s* being commonly used : thus, he trains, she loves, it rains; not he traineth, she loveth, it raineth.

#### DIRECTIONS CONCERNING REGULAR VERBS.

These are, fortunately, very simple ; for they have no useless and troublesome changes or terminations, except *est* or *st* in connexion with thou, and *eth*, *th*, *es* or *s*, in connexion with *he*, *she*, *it*, or any one object or singular nominative in the third person, and what is called present tense. The only mistake, therefore, which persons are apt to commit who are at all accustomed to grammatic usage, is in not putting *est* in connexion with *thou*, and *es* or *s* in connexion with *he*, *she*, *it*, or any singular noun, in the present tense. The second person singular, i. e. *thou* is (as already intimated) never used except in prayer, and by the Quakers, and in jocular or contemptuous discourse. The chief attention, therefore, of the grammatic learner should be directed to the *third person singular, present tense*; and he has only to keep this explicit rule steadily in view : When the nominative is singular, i. e. when *one* object is connected with the word called a regular verb, *es* or *s* must be affixed; but when the nominative is plural, i. e. when two or more objects are indicated, *es* or *s* must not be affixed. Thus,

John *trains* the pointers : John and James *train* the pointers : John or James *trains* the pointers. William *possesses* good sense and *loves* instruction ; he diligently *applies* to useful learning ; and his

brothers *possess* much affection for him : they, too, *love* instruction and *apply* diligently to learning.

The following are instances of grammatic impropriety : the improper words (i. e. in having or in not having *es* or *s* affixed) are put in Italics.

All joy and tranquillity *dwells* there : Much joy, or at least tranquillity *dwell* there. Thoughtless and intemperate pleasure usually *deteriorate* both mind and character : Intemperate pleasures usually *deteriorates* both mind and character. Ignorance and negligence *has* produced the effect : Ignorance or negligence *have* produced the effect : Ignorance with negligence *produce* bad consequences : Negligence as well as ignorance *produce* bad consequences. Not only his fortune his reputation *suffer* by his misconduct. The king and his courtiers *has* passed by : The king with his courtiers *have* passed by : The king as well as his courtiers *have* passed by. Nothing *delight* me so much as the works of nature. Public and private happiness, national dignity, and all that is most interesting to human beings in this world, *depends* greatly on the character of the government.

In all the above instances, the attentive learner will perceive that the words put in Italics are wrong, because *es* or *s* is affixed when the nominative is plural, or omitted when the nominative is singular. There is some difficulty at first, in ascertaining the nominative or promptly discovering whether it be plural or singular. To this point, therefore, the gramma-

tic student should apply particular attention, until it becomes quite familiar to him. The following remarks are intended for his assistance.

1. All nouns and pronouns that are evidently plural, i. e. which indicate two or more objects, must not have *es* or *s* affixed to the verb with which they are connected: as, They, These, Those, Men, Women, Children, Houses, &c.: thus, They love us—not They *loves* us. These are the friends of the poor—not These *is* the friends of the poor. Men naturally love their children—not *loves*. People do not consider how much they are improved by adversity—not People *does* not consider how much *it is* improved by adversity, &c.

2. When two or more singular nouns and pronouns are enumerated or added together, they form a plural nominative to the verb: thus, John and James and William love play: John, James, William, equally love play. Robert and his sister Mary often walk together in the fields: both he and she prefer the country to the city: they are fond of botany, and seldom return from their walks without some botanic specimens.

In all such cases the pronouns must be in the plural number.

3. Two or more circumstances form a plural nominative: thus, To see the beauties of nature and to listen to the music of the groves, *produce* agreeable sensations—not *produces*. The flashing lightning and the reverberating thunder, *produce*

strong emotions, especially in the minds of timid persons. To speak truth, to be diligent in business, punctual to engagements, and honourable in transactions, *are* important rules of prudential wisdom ; and they seldom fail to give respectability to the character of every one who diligently observes them.

The *conjunctive and*, is the only word that connects two or more nouns, pronouns, or members of a sentence into a plural nominative : thus, The sun that shines, the rain that descends, and the wind that blows, *produce* good to mankind. The conjunction is sometimes omitted : The sun, the rain, the wind, produce good to mankind. Such words as *with*, *as well as*, &c., though they seem connective, do not form a plural nominative : thus, The king with his body guard *has* just passed—not *have*. The king as well as his attendants *has* passed by.

As before intimated, all disconnective words, such as *neither*, *nor*, *either*, *or*, have the opposite effect of *and*. There *is* in many people, neither knowledge, wisdom, nor virtue—not *are*. It is either John or James that *delights* in music. Beauty, wealth, or fame, *is* a very precarious possession.

Except when the noun or pronoun coming after the *disjunctive* is plural, the nominative is always singular : thus, Neither adversity nor enemies *disturb* his equanimity—not *disturbs*. Neither enemies nor adversity disturbs—not *disturb*. It is better in such cases, if possible, to put the plural word last ;

but in all such forms of expression the inconvenience of arbitrary grammar is strikingly obvious.

Concerning nouns which indicate plurality when considered in one view, and unity or individuality when considered in another—there is no uniform grammatic usage. Some authors would write, “My people *do* not consider; *they have* not known me:” others, My people *does* not consider: *it has* not known me. The multitude eagerly *pursue* pleasure as *their* chief good. The multitude eagerly *pursues* pleasure as *its* chief good. The council *were* divided in their sentiments. The council *was* divided in *its* sentiments. In such cases there is, fortunately, not yet any established etiquette or despotic authority: the speaker or writer is left to the freedom of his own will; only having once made choice as to plural or singular, there is propriety in keeping to it; not saying, My people *do* not consider: *it has* not known me: or, My people *does* not consider: *they have* not known me, &c.

4. Any noun, pronoun, or member of a sentence immediately preceded by a preposition, is never included in the nominative to a verb. This is worthy of attention, as tending to prevent grammatic blunders; many of which happen from supposing that plural nouns, pronouns, or expressions, are the *nominative*, merely because they come before the verb: hence such instances of false grammar as the following: The number of the signatures *are* twenty. The number of places *amount* to twenty. Many a

failure in the transactions of business and in human affairs *originate* in imprudence. John with James and William *live* in the country. In all these examples, the nominative is singular, and therefore *is*, not *are*, should be employed ; and the regular verb should have *s* affixed, thus : The number of the signatures *is* twenty : The number of the places *amounts* to twenty. Many a failure in the transactions, &c., *originates* in imprudence. John with James and William *lives* in the country.

The following are instances of grammatic impropriety :

The language should be perspicuous and correct : in proportion as either of these two qualities *are* wanting, the language is imperfect. Every one of the letters *bear* date after his banishment. Each of his children *behave* badly. Of the diversities in human character, some *is* better and some *is* worse ; none *is* wholly faultless. *None*, i. e. *no one*, is properly singular, but custom has assigned to it a plural import. *Some*, like *many*, when a singular noun is not put after it, is always plural : thus, Some one *says* ; Some author *says* ; Many a one has said so ; Many an author has said so, &c. But if these adjectives be not connected with a singular noun, they are always considered plural : thus, Some *say*—not *says*. Many *have said* so—not *has said*.

---

## DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE IRREGULAR VERBS.

THESE have been exhibited; and the grammatic learner should either commit them to memory or practice much upon them. They differ from the regular verbs only in not having *ed* affixed in what is called the past tense. The following are some of the most frequent ungrammatical uses of the irregular verbs :

I *knowed* him long ago; I have *knowed* him many years—it should be, I *knew*, I *have known*. The wind *blowed* hard last night; The wind has *blowed* hard all day—*blew*, *has blown*. John *buyed* a knife yesterday, and he has *buyed* a pencil to-day—*bought*. The horse *drowed* in the waggon yesterday, and he has *drowed* in the plough to-day—*drew*, *has drawn*. The corn *growed* well in the spring, and has *growed* well ever since—*grew*, *has grown*.

It is to be hoped that literary persons of sufficient influence will set the example of discarding such anomalous proprieties; but, in the mean time, the middle and lower classes of the grammatic world must prudently, perhaps, do homage to established usage.

---



## REMARKS ON THE PREPOSITIONS.

It has been already observed, when these come immediately before any pronoun which has two forms, (called *nominative* and *objective*,) it must be put in the second form, or objective case: thus, I went with *her* to *them* from *him*: John gave this book to *me*, and said it was a present to both of *us*, &c.—not with *she*, to *they*, from *he*, &c. There is a very general mistake, as if *than* and *as* had the same effect in changing the form of the pronoun: thus, I am older than *her*; she is wiser than *him*; we are not so rich as *them*; but it does not follow that they are more happy than *us*—it should be, than *she*, than *he*, as *they*, than *we*.

The learner should commit the prepositions to memory, or render them familiar by frequent inspection. There is some diversity in their application; for even such as are strictly synonymous, are not all (according to preponderating usage) interchangeable. In the following examples, the *first* mode of expression is best sanctioned by established usage:

He found the greatest difficulty *in* speaking, or *of* speaking. His abhorrence of Popery—abhorrence to Popery. It is a change for the better—to the better. He was very different then from what he is now—to what he is now. I differ from you in opinion—I differ with you in opinion. There is no need of it—for it. This is no diminution of his greatness—to his greatness. It is derogatory from his autho-

riety—to his authority. It is no derogation of his honour—to his honour. It is consonant to our nature—with our nature.

Such niceties of appropriation may not be wholly disregarded; but liberty is better than slavish subjection to mere custom.

It is of some importance that the grammatic disciple should learn to disuse *useless* words and syllables. *Upon* and *on* are synonymous; and as the prefix *up* is useless, it should be discarded: thus, He came *on* horseback—not *upon* horseback. *Along*, *together*, &c., are often uselessly employed before *with*: John went *along* with James—better, John went with James. The ship *together* with her cargo was burned—The ship with her cargo was burned—or, The ship and her cargo were burned.

Wherever prepositions can be omitted without obscuring the meaning, composition is improved by the omission: thus, He went last Monday—is better than, He went *on* last Monday. The rain has been falling a long time—is better than, The rain has been falling *for* a long time. He could not forbear expressing his displeasure—is better than, He could not forbear *from* expressing his displeasure, &c.

It is become a kind of rule, that whenever a present participle (i. e. a verb with *ing* affixed) has *the* before it, *of* should be placed after: thus, At the hearing *of* this intelligence—not, At the hearing this intelligence. But it would be better to omit both *the* and *of*: thus, “If the cares of Hampden had

been directed to the unfolding and guiding his dispositions." "Mallet, of the King's Bench, fell under the displeasure of the House of Lords for being privy to the preparing a petition." It would be better to omit *the*, (which is often as useless in composition as a mummy in a deliberative assembly,) and write, If the cares of Hampden had been directed to unfolding and guiding his disposition; better still,—directed to unfold and guide his disposition. Mallet fell under displeasure—for being privy to preparing a petition; still better,—for being concerned in preparing a petition.

Such clumsy modes of expression might be easily avoided; but *the* and *of* are equally useless in such connexions. A good general rule is, to omit every word not necessary to express the meaning of a sentence; and to adopt such modes of construction as will enable the composer to express his meaning in the fewest words. Swerve *from* the path—is better than, Swerve *out of* the path—because, in the first sentence, one word (*from*) performs the office of two words (*out of*) in the last.

There is always a want of dignity in terminating sentences with such insignificant words as prepositions: Whom will you present it *to*? He is a poet I am much pleased *with*—better, To whom will you present it? He is a poet with whom I am much pleased—or still better, I am much pleased with him as a poet.

## DIRECTIONS CONCERNING ADJECTIVES.

1. UNGRAMMATIC speakers and writers are apt to use adjectives instead of adverbs: thus, He walks *bad*—for walks *badly*. He is *miserable* poor—for *miserably* poor. He acts *agreeable* to his instructions—for *agreeably*. He speaks his mind *very free*—*freely*. John went *direct* to the city—*directly*. James is *steady* employed—*steadily* employed.

The rule is, to add *ly* to the adjective to express the manner of any action or quality: thus, He sleeps *soundly*—not He sleeps *sound*. They wait *patiently*—not *patient*. They stand *peaceably* (contr. of ‡ *peaceablely*)—not *peaceable*. He spoke *forcibly* (contr. of ‡ *forciblely*)—not *forcible*. He is *evidently* prejudiced—not *evident*.

There is an awkwardness in the double affix *ly*, which is better avoided: He lived *soberly* and *godlily*—better *piously*. He acted *friendly* towards me—better *kindly*.

2. Double comparatives and superlatives should not be employed; such as, *more stronger*, *more superior*, *most strongest*, &c. *More* is equivalent to the affix *er*, and *most* to *est*; when, therefore, they are united there is manifest tautology.

3. Such adjectives as the following do not admit of comparative or superlative words and affixes, *viz.* Chief, Extreme, Perfect, Right, Universal, &c.

It is evidently illogical to say *chiefest*, *extremest*,

*more perfect, most perfect, more right, most or more universal.*

*More* and *Most*, or the affixes *er* and *est*, may be employed at pleasure; but the general practice is to use the form which is most agreeable to the ear: thus, *more friendly, most friendly*, in preference to—*friendlier, friendliest*.

4. According to the grammatists the comparative should be employed in reference to two objects: thus, John and James are of the same age, but James is the *stronger* of the two—not *strongest*. This rule, however, is not uniformly observed even by grammatic speakers, and it has some appearance of grammatic pedantry. There is, however, an evident propriety in using only the superlative in reference to three or more objects: Of the three brothers Robert is *most* learned.

The following expressions are faulty: Of all the nations of Europe our own has *fewer* imperfections—*fewest*. The representative form of government is the best of any; better thus: Of all forms of government the representative form is the best; or, the representative is the best of all the different forms of government; or simply, (certainly the *best mode of expression*,) the representative is the best form of government. The simplest and shortest mode of expression is the best *of any*: the two last words are wholly expletive.

---

## REMARKS ON COMPOSITION.

THE reader must be aware that good composition and good grammar are not identical; that the last is, at best, only an accomplishment; and that the first is of the highest importance. There are two very different senses in which composition may be pronounced good, according as it is viewed in reference to logic or to rhetoric, i. e. as tried by *sense* or by *taste*. Concerning the last there is no wisdom in disputing; for it is as arbitrary as fashion. Persons, indeed, who wish to have an agreeable style, will not wholly disregard it; and they may read with advantage the writings of Blair and other rhetoricians. All who wish to have smooth diction will avoid, as much as possible, harsh words and combinations of words in sentences: all who value elegance of composition will avoid low words, phrases, and metaphors. Persons of rhetorical habitudes delight in eulogistic and dyslogistic phraseology; those of a logical determination prefer dyslogistic expression. It is believed that such persons, however different from one another, may consult, with some advantage, a preceding part of this Introduction. All we intend here, is to present a few remarks on composition, considered simply as a medium of meaning, or of mental intercommunication, i. e. as an interpreter of the understanding, without any reference to *taste*, considered as a distinct entity from *sense*.

Swift, we believe, defines good composition—"Right words in right places." This, with due allowance for the vagueness of epigrammatic brevity, is a tolerable approximation to a good definition; and it indicates two important particulars necessary to be kept in view, especially by young persons, viz. judicious choice and skilful arrangement of words. The best preparation for such judicious choice and skilful arrangement, is intimate acquaintance with etymology and literature.

The choice of words has been so much referred to in the present work, that specific remarks or directions concerning it seem unnecessary. The properties essential to a perfect sentence, as defined by Blair, are, "Perspicuity, Unity, Strength, Harmony." The last property is excluded from our present consideration. A judicious composer will not disregard the ear; but the understanding is the primary object; and he will never sacrifice sense to sound or meaning to euphony.

Perspicuity, according to the above rhetorician, is resolvable into *purity*, *propriety*, and *precision*. His remarks on purity and propriety are too vague to deserve transcription. "Precision [he writes] signifies retrenching all superfluities, and pruning the expression in such a manner as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of his idea who uses it." This does not seem essentially different from his account of *strength* in composition. "The first rule which we shall give for promoting the

*strength* of a sentence is, to take from it all redundant words." "As sentences should be divested of superfluous words, so, also, should they appear without superfluous members." Much that he advances on *strength* belongs to *harmony*. Two or three of his remarks on Unity seem worthy of transcription. "Unity is an indispensable property. The very nature of a sentence implies one proposition to be expressed. It may consist indeed of parts; but these parts must be so intimately knit together as to make the impression upon the mind of one object, not of many. To preserve this, we must observe, that during the course of the sentence the scene should be changed as little as possible. There is generally, in every sentence, some person or thing which is the governing word. This should be continued so, if possible, from the beginning to the end. Should a man express himself in this manner: After we came to anchor, they put me on shore, where I was saluted by all my friends, who received me with the greatest kindness. Here, though the objects are sufficiently connected, yet, by shifting so often the person—*we, they, I, who*—the sense is nearly lost. The sentence is restored to its proper unity by the following construction: Having come to anchor I was put on shore, where I was saluted by all my friends, and received by them with the greatest kindness. Another rule is, never to crowd into one sentence things which have so little connexion that they might be divided into two or more sentences.



The following is an instance of faulty composition :  
 ‘ Their march was through an uncultivated country, whose savage inhabitants fared hardly, having no other riches than a breed of lean sheep, whose flesh was rank and unsavory, by reason of their continual feeding upon sea-fish.’ Here the scene is repeatedly changed. The march of the Greeks, the description of the inhabitants, through whose country they passed, the account of their sheep, and the reason of their sheep being disagreeable food, make a jumble of objects slightly related to each other, which the reader cannot, without difficulty, comprehend under one view.”

*Definiteness* seems the single word most expressive of our notion of good composition ; for indefiniteness is the most predominant fault, and that which, more than any other, defeats the professed purpose of language. The great object of every composer should be, to express his meaning so distinctly as to render doubts concerning it impossible. Rules never can create excellence, but they may afford considerable assistance in acquiring mastery in an art ; and for the benefit of young *composers* we venture a few directions.

# 1. ENDEAVOUR TO EXPRESS YOUR MEANING IN AS FEW WORDS AS POSSIBLE.

The shortest is (all other things being equal) the best mode of expression. Many a bad sentence is rendered a good one merely by throwing away useless

expletives or superfluous words. Such terms as *verbosity*, *verbiage*, *verbosity*, *wordiness*, indicate the general sentiment concerning the present question, and admonish the composer that his *words should be few and well ordered*. He will find this the surest guide—the best assistant in composing well; whilst it tends, more than any other rule, to relieve him from perplexity, and to render his task easy. “Feeble writers employ a multitude of words to make themselves understood, as they think, more distinctly; and they only confound the reader.” “The first rule which we shall give for promoting the *strength* [substitute *definiteness*] of a sentence is, to take from it all redundant words. Whatever can be easily supplied in the mind is better omitted in the expression. It is certainly one of the most useful exercises of correction, in reviewing what we have written, to contract that round-about mode of expression, and to cut off those useless excrescences which are usually found in a first draught.”\* “As sentences should be divested of superfluous words, they should also appear without superfluous members. In opposition to this is the fault so frequently met

\* Blair. The author adds, very rhetorically, “But we must be careful not to *run into* the opposite extreme of pruning so closely as to give a hardness and dryness to the style. *Some leaves must be left to shelter and adorn the fruit*”!!! It is right, perhaps, to confess, that in quoting from this author we have taken the liberty of contracting some *round-about* modes of expression.

### 3. GUARD AGAINST TAUTOLOGY IN EMPLOYING SYNONYMOUS WORDS.

This is a very common fault. Many writers suppose that they are enriching their composition with additional thoughts, when they are only encumbering it with synonymous terms ;\* or that they are expressing their meaning more fully and forcibly when they are only muffling it in verballity. This is so much the general practice—the *established usage* in composition, that young composers should rather lean to the opposite extreme ; and the structure of language—all the usual modes of expression are so essentially tautologic and verbose, that there is very little danger of pruning verballity too unsparingly, and not leaving sufficient *foliage* (as advised by Dr. Blair) *to shelter and adorn the fruit*.

\* “The great source of a loose style,” writes Dr. Blair, “in opposition to precision, is the inaccurate and unhappy use of those words called synonymous.” Very true ; but he adds, “Scarcely, in any language, are there two words which express precisely the same idea.” This notion is the very source of that loose style which he blames ; for persons do not employ synonyms, because they suppose them to express precisely the same idea, but because they suppose them not to express precisely the same idea. So far from the Doctor’s notion being correct, the converse of it holds good, viz., that there is hardly a single idea which has not several names.

#### 4. ADOPT THAT ARRANGEMENT OF WORDS WHICH PRESENTS YOUR MEANING MOST DISTINCTLY.

The following remark of Dr. Blair is judicious :  
 “ From the nature of our language, a leading rule in the arrangement of our sentences is, that the words or members most nearly related, should be placed as near to each other as possible, so as to make their mutual relation clearly appear. This rule is too frequently neglected even by good writers. A few instances will show both its importance and its application.”

Some of these instances we will, for the sake of brevity, present in our own manner: “ By greatness,” says Mr. Addison, “ I do not only mean the *bulk* of any single object, but the largeness of a whole view.” Better thus: I mean by greatness, not merely the magnitude of any single object, but that of a whole view. “ Are these designs,” says Lord Bolingbroke, “ which any man who is born a Briton, in any circumstances, in any situation, ought to be ashamed or afraid to avow?” Better thus: Should any Briton ever be ashamed or afraid to avow these designs: or, Are not these designs worthy the fearless avowal of every Briton? “ It is folly to *pretend* [Sherlock’s Sermons] to arm ourselves against the accidents of life by heaping up treasures, which nothing can protect us against but the good providence of our Heavenly Father.”—It is folly to endeavour, by heaping up riches, to arm ourselves

against the accidents of life ; for nothing can protect us against them but the good providence of our Heavenly Father.—The reader may compare the above with Blair's Lectures.

The following quotations from the History of the Commonwealth (which happens to be lying before us at the moment) are remarkable instances of faulty composition by a professed author of some reputation and much practice.

“The tide of fortune had set so strongly in favour of the king, immediately after the surrender of Bristol, as would infallibly have reduced hearts less devoted and minds less energetic, than those of many who guided the resistance against him, to despair.”—The tide of fortune, which set so strongly in favour of the king, immediately after the surrender of Bristol, would infallibly have reduced to despair, hearts less devoted and minds less energetic than those which guided the resistance against him. “This *had*, for a series of years, *had* the effect of giving an appearance of *peace* and *tranquillity* to Ireland, which had been almost without example.” Perhaps all this means nothing more than, This gave to Ireland, for a series of years, an unusual appearance of tranquillity. “In unison with these proceedings, on the part of those who supported the public cause and commensurate with the urgency of the case, were the preparations made for the protection of the metropolis.”—The preparations made for the protection of the metropolis, were in unison with these pro-

ceedings, and commensurate with the urgency of the case. The sentence is still very indifferent: "on the part of those who supported the public cause," is mere surplus.

These examples furnish abundant evidence that there is a close connexion between multiplicity of words and faulty arrangement. We have said, that many a bad sentence is rendered a good one, simply by throwing away useless words. In the following instances the useless parts are marked by italics.

"The king's march against Gloucester was the first decisive evidence *that was afforded* of the change in public affairs." "The defence of the city was conducted with great courage *and resolution*." "The events announced were far from being such as he wished *them to prove*,"—"which are requisite to *the* forming a great warlike leader,"—"devoted himself to *the* forwarding the cause of his sovereign;" still better, devoted himself to promote the cause of his sovereign; better still, he devoted himself to the cause of his sovereign; for "whatever can be easily supplied in the mind is better omitted in the sentence." The judicious use of ellipsis tends rather to produce explicitness than obscurity, whilst it effects brevity. We ought to put others to as little trouble as possible in apprehending our meaning; hence, the importance of endeavouring to present it to them both distinctly and concisely. The two grand qualities, therefore, of good composition, are definiteness and conciseness, or perspicuity and brevity. These

excellencies rest not on *taste*, but on *sense*; and every sensible man may, if he chooses, possess them.

A few remarks concerning *metaphor* may not be wholly without utility. A great part of language is, of necessity, metaphoric, and therefore we cannot reasonably interdict figurative expression. Whether a better system of mental intercommunication might not be invented is a fair question for consideration; but that which we now employ is essentially metaphoric; and perhaps more logical error, or metaphysical absurdity, results from mistaking figurative for literal phraseology, than from the injudicious use of metaphors. All, therefore, that can be reasonably insisted on, is a judicious use of figurative language; and the present rhetorical mania for metaphor renders such discretion peculiarly necessary.\*

The following suggestions, perhaps, deserve the attention of young composers:

Never employ metaphor for the sake of metaphor, i. e. never adopt a figurative except when it evidently expresses your meaning more effectually than a literal mode of expression. The converse of

\* Probably the metaphoric mania is at the height, and that a reaction will soon commence in favour of literal simplicity; such as that which followed the figurative era of Jeremy Taylor. No rage lasts long. The rhetorical taste of a people is ever vibrating from one extreme to another. Though the imagination predominates over the understanding, the cultivated mind is at last surfeited with imagery.

this seems the rule adopted by many fashionable *littérateurs*. They appear never to employ plain *unmetaphoric* diction, but when they cannot conveniently avoid it: they are always making an effort to produce effect, or to display their *genius*: their main object is to surprise or astonish by the novelty and brilliancy of their imagery: in plainer terms, their chief intention is to show how clever they are at getting up metaphors. Such being the childish purpose (for there is as much dignity or utility in blowing bubbles) of authors and orators, it is not wonderful that literature should exhibit wasteful profusion of idle and absurd figurative language. Take the following specimens from a work now before us: "Too agitated to still down his bitter and perturbed spirit to the tranquil pursuit of his art, the stings of his lacerated and disappointed feelings found vent in a medium more adapted to give a rapid and ready expression to powerful emotion." "The answer of the poet, whose own feelings of misery come at once upon the canvas, is the very epic of melancholy discontentment—a discontentment engendered by the finest sensibility, blasted in its hopes and its efforts for ameliorating human sufferings and amending human institutions." "But that fatal pre-eminence which the lowly worship and the envious malign, gives only a finer faculty for suffering; and while it opens the sources of petty vexations and exalts the poignancy of the greater moral afflictions, it places its gifted victim at an im-



## ORTHOGRAPHY OR RIGHT SPELLING.

THE *anomalousness* of English spelling has long been a subject of general complaint ; and, perhaps, the evil is now too inveterate to be remedied ; or rather, it is probable, that those who could remedy the evil will not make the attempt. But we are unwilling to despair of improvement ; and, with due deference, will offer some suggestions on the subject after presenting the rules of our present orthography.

## RULE I.

Monosyllables ending with *f*, *l*, or *s*, preceded by a single vowel, double the final consonant ; as, *staff*, *mill*, *pass*, &c. The only exceptions are *of*, *if*, *as*, *is*, *has*, *was*, *yes*, *his*, *this*, *has*.

The only monosyllables ending with any other consonants which double the last letter are, *add*, *butt*, *egg*, *odd*, *err*, *inn*, and *buzz*.

The reduplication of *f*, *l*, and *s*, is of (comparatively) recent adoption ; and it was, probably, intended to indicate distinctions in pronunciation which do not now exist : *staf*, *mil*, &c, would certainly be simpler than *staff*, *mill*, &c. ; and something is gained by discarding useless letters : but the above rule is sufficiently distinct and is soon learned.

## RULE II.

Words ending with *y* preceded by a consonant,

form the plurals of nouns, the persons of verbs, by changing y into i: and when an additional syllable is assumed, y is changed into i; as *spy, spies*; I *carry*, thou *carriest*, he *carrieth* or *carries*; *carried*, *carrier*; *happy, happier, happiest, happily, happiness*.

The y is retained before ing, that i may not be doubled; as, *carry, carrying*; *burry, burrying*, &c.

But y preceded by a vowel in such instances as the above, is not changed; *boy, boys*; I *cloy*, he *cloys, cloyed*, &c.; except in *lay, pay*, and *say*; from which are formed *laid, paid*, and *said*.

The above is a bad rule, for, instead of answering any useful purpose, it renders spelling difficult. The y should either remain unchanged when it has been adopted, or it should be banished as superfluous. Why should we write *carrier, happier, accompaniment*, rather than *carryer, happier, accompaniment*?

### RULE III.

Words ending with a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, and with the accent on the last syllable, double the consonant when another syllable is added beginning with a vowel; as, to *abet*, *abetting*, an *abettor*; to *begin*, a *beginner*; *wit, witty*; *thin, thinnish*, &c.

But if a diphthong precede or the accent be on the preceding syllable, the consonant is not doubled; as, to *toil, toiling*; to *offer* an *offering*; *maid, maiden*.

This rule is sufficiently distinct; but the following

examples are at variance with it: *revel, revelling; jewel, jeweller; counsel, counsellor; travel, traveller; bigot, bigotted; worship, worshipped, worshipper*. Such anomalies should be proscribed.

#### RULE IV.

When *able, ible, ing, ish*, are added to a word ending in *e*, it is omitted in the spelling: as, *blame, blamable, blaming; cure, curable, curing; sense, sensible; place, placing; lodge, lodging; slave, slavish; prude, prudish, &c.*: not *blameable, blaming, lodgeing, slaveish, &c.*: but when the final *e* is immediately preceded by *g* and *c* soft, it is retained in connexion with *able* and *ible*: as, *change, changeable; peace, peaceable; service, serviceable; charge, chargeable; not changable, peacable, servicable, chargable*.

This is such a perplexing rule to learners and persons who have little opportunity of learning, that the converse of it would be more sensible, viz. that no letter be ever dropped or omitted.

#### RULE V.

Words terminating in double *l*, drop one *l* when they are taken into composition: as, *fully, fulness, fulfil, handful, dunghil, withal, also, chilblain, foretel, always, welcome, &c.*: not *fully, fullness, fullfill, handfull, dunghill, withall, allso, chillblain, foretell, allways, wellcome, &c.*

The reason of dropping an *l* seems to have been

the crowded appearance of such words as *fully*, *skillless*, &c. Having begun to exclude the superfluous l in such cases, the exclusion was extended or rendered absolute; whilst double f and double s were suffered to remain: as *stiffly*, *stiffness*, *successful*, *carelessness*: not *stifly*, *stifness*, *succesful*, *carelesness*, &c.

The usual affixes in connexion with which the superfluous l is dropped, are ly, less, full, ness: with such affixes as er, est, eth, s, ing, age, &c., it remains: as, till, tilling, tillage, tiller, &c.

The above are all the rules that the present state of English orthography seems to admit of: there are, indeed, eleven or twelve rules usually given in systems of grammar, but one half of them are repetitions of the other.

It would be a great improvement if the following principles were adopted:

1. That all superfluous letters be discarded: as in staff, full, grass; which might be spelled *staf*, *ful*, *gras*: and in have, serve, swerve, &c.; which might be spelled *hav*, *serv*, *swerv*, &c.: and in covetous, candour, &c.; which might be *covetos*, *candor*; sense, *sens*; immense, *immens*.

The only good reason for double s would be its having uniformly a different pronunciation from single s; but the latter has often the sharp or hissing sound as well as the former. The proper office of final e is to render the preceding vowel long, as in *mate*, or to render g and c soft, as in *charge*, *face*, &c.

2. Every letter should remain unchanged in the same word: as carry, carryer; accompany, accompaniment; lay, layed; pay, payed; day, dayly, &c.: not *carrier, accompaniment, laid, paid, daily*.

All such instances as the following properly come under the above rule: high, *hight* (not *height*); nigh, *nighbour*; whole, *wholely* (not *wholly*); connect, *connection* (not *connexion*).

The reason of the above rule is obvious: it renders spelling easy, and it indicates the derivation and meaning of words.

3. No letter should be dropped: as blame, *blameable*; place, *placeing*; lodge, *lodgeing*; judge, *judgement*; abridge, *abridgement*; acknowledge, *acknowledgement*: not blamable, placing, lodging, judgment, abridgment, acknowledgment: due, *duely*; true, *truely*—not *duly, truly*, &c. &c.

The reason of this rule is also obvious: it would prevent much perplexity.

4. No letter should be reduplicated except for the purpose of indicating the pronunciation: as abet, *abettor*; hat, *hatter*; distil, *distilling*. *Revelling, counsellor, bigotted, worshipper*, &c., as before noticed, are contrary to rule.

5. All duplicate, triplicate, or diversified forms of spelling the same word, should be reduced to that one form which is most agreeable to analogy, and which best indicates etymology and meaning: as show, shew; strow, strew; author, authour; labor, labour; inquire, enquire; negotiate, negociate; ex-

pense, expence; connection, connexion; allege, alledge; appretiate, appreciate; martial, marshal.

The first of these forms (i. e. show, labor, inquire, &c.) is evidently to be preferred; and we have ventured to adopt it in the Dictionary. The other improvements suggested must obtain the suffrage of the literary public, or of its influential members, before a lexicographer can prudently adopt them. The first rule proposed for adoption seems the only one likely to encounter much objection; and but for double l we would not have proposed it: but leaving orthography as it is, as to f, l, s, we may either adhere to *Rule 3*,—though such words as *fully, skillless*, would have a crowded appearance,—or we may follow the old rule, viz. Words terminating in double l drop one l when they are compounded with other words. The sole object of the author is simplicity, i. e. utility. Let English spelling be made easy—let it be divested of unnecessary difficulty—and he cares not how the improvement is effected.

Some of the most objectionable peculiarities of our present orthography are evidently adopted from the French, though our system of pronunciation is very different from theirs: as enquire for inquire, candour for candor. Custom is not yet so fixed as to prevent us from adopting the Latin spelling of such words; but perhaps the French *ou* is now immovably established in many instances; such as *court, mould, wound, covetous*. All that can be safely recommended with such instances is, to make them conform as

much as possible to the analogy of English pronunciation, as in *sound*, *hour*. One of the greatest evils we have to complain of in the present connexion, is that of conflicting contrariety between orthography and orthoëpy, which should be mutually adapted, and not opposed to one another. There is a whimsical combination of *le* and *re*, instead of *el* and *er*, which might be yet rectified without much violence to established usage: as *theatre*, *bundle*, *metre*, *spindle*, &c.—instead of *theater*, *bundel*, *meter*, *spindel*. The latter form answers to the pronunciation; and final *e* should be appropriated as much as possible to such words as *mate*, *charge*, *face*, &c., in which it indicates that *g* and *c* are soft, and that the preceding vowel is long.

---

#### THE ORTHOËPY, OR RIGHT PRONUNCIATION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

HERE there is as much cause for complaint as concerning orthography; for *custom* is neither fixed nor uniform, but exceedingly various and anomalous; so that Dr. Watts (if we remember correctly) proposed, as a rule of English spelling and pronunciation, that the one should be as unlike the other as possible.

It is to be regretted that so much having been done of late years to fix and indicate the mode of pronouncing, more has not been done to render it simple and uniform. Much praise, indeed, is due

to Mr. Walker, who was evidently capable of much higher departments in language than Orthoëpy and elocution ; but, as he frankly confesses, he was afraid to attempt all that he considered necessary ; and in general contented himself with ascertaining and exhibiting the *present, polite usage*. Perhaps little more could be accomplished ; and in this he was remarkably successful ; so that his Dictionary is justly regarded as the standard of English pronunciation. We have hardly ever departed from that standard, except in adopting a simpler notation : for, as in one respect, Mr. Walker attempted too little, so in another respect he performed too much ; for it cannot surely be necessary to mark the sound of every word in the English language : it must be quite sufficient to mark the words in which pronunciation is likely to err. In the following Dictionary, therefore, those words only are marked by a different spelling, which deviate in any respect from the analogy of the language : the pronunciation of all the rest is considered as sufficiently indicated by the accent, with the assistance, occasionally, of the following marks ¯ and ˘, the first of which denotes that a vowel is long—the second, that it is short : as, contem'plāte, älb. The reader will please, also, to attend to the following particulars respecting the Dictionary :

1. The accent is to be understood as falling on the letter immediately preceding the mark or sign : as, Ac'cent, n. Accen't, v. a. ; Fa'vor, Endeav'or.

2. When the letter immediately preceding the ac-



centual mark is a vowel, it is long ; but if a consonant immediately precede the mark, the preceding vowel is short : thus, Fa'vor, Fab'ric, which is equivalent to Fāvor, Fābric.

3. Final *e* renders the preceding vowel long, except when it is followed by a double consonant : as, Mate, Mete, Mite, Mote, Mute, Na'ture, Rēmō'te, &c., pronounced as if marked, Māte, Mēte, Mīte, Mōte, Mūte, Nā'tūre, Rēmō'te.

But when two or more consonants come between the final *e* and the preceding vowel, it is short : as, Battle, Babble, Badge, &c., pronounced as if marked Bāttle, Bābble, Bādge.

In such words as Intes'tine, Fu'tile, &c., the vowel preceding the final *e* is made short by Mr. Walker ; but in the opinion of the author it is better to make all such instances conform to the rule ; and the long vowel sound is an improvement in all such connexions to the English language ; for it is, in general, both harsh to the ear and hard to the mouth, from having too few *open* and too many *shut* vowel sounds.

4. When the accent is not placed on a vowel, and when it is not followed by a final *e* in the same syllable, the vowel is to be always considered short : as, Fatt'en, Hab'it, &c., pronounced as if marked Fättén, Hăbīt.

5. In monosyllables terminating with *all*, *a* has the same sound as *aw* or *au* : as, All, Ball, Call, &c., pronounced Awl, Bawl, Caul.

In all cases, when the accent is placed before the *l*, *a* is to be pronounced *aw*; when the accent is put after *l*, *a* is to be pronounced short: as, *Fa'lse*, *Ma'lt*, *Fa'lter*; *Al'b*, *Al'titude*, *Ca'lumny*, *Ca'llet*; pronounced as if marked—*fawls*, *mawlt*, *fawltter*; *älb*, *ä'l'titude*, &c.

6. Silent letters are put in *Italics*: as, *Hour*, *Ve'hement*, *Endeav'our*, *Caught*, &c., pronounced *Our*, *Véëment*, *Endev'ur*, *Caut*.

7. The following diphthongs have uniformly the long sound of *a*, (except when one of the vowels is in the *Italic* character,) *ay*, *ai*, *ei*, *ey*: as, *Maid*, *Pail*, *Say*, *Rein*, *They*, &c., pronounced like *Made*, *Pale*, &c.

But when one of the vowels is marked as silent, the other vowel is short: as, *Plaid*, *Raill'ery*, *Mountain*, &c., pronounced *Plad*, *Ra'llery*, *Moutin*.

When *ei* sounds like long *e*, as in *ceil*, *ceiling*, &c., it is indicated by a different spelling in the Dictionary.

8. *Au*, *aw*, are to be uniformly considered as sounding the same as in *Caul*, *Awl*, except when the pronunciation of the words containing them is particularly indicated.

But *au* before *n* is pronounced like *a* in *far*, and in the colloquial words *ca'nt* and *sha'nt*, except when a different sound is particularly indicated: thus, *Aunt*, *Askaunce*, *Askaunt*, *Haunt*, &c., are pronounced like † *An't*, † *Can't*.

9. Ea, ee, are pronounced like *e* long, except when one of the letters is in the Italian character: as, *Annea'l*, *Peel*, *Fear*, *Feed*.

The exceptions, which are numerous, are all marked: as, *Bread'*, *Head'*, *Earl*, pronounced *bred*, *hed*, *Erl*.

10. Ew, eu, ue, are always pronounced like *u* long, except when a difference is particularly indicated: as, *Few*, *Feud*, *Due*. But after *r*, *ue*, *ew*, are generally pronounced like *oo*: as, *True*, *Screw*, pronounced *troo*, *scroo*.

11. Oa and oe always sound like long *o*, except when a difference is particularly indicated in the Dictionary; as, *Moat*, *Sloe*, pronounced *mote*, *slō*.

12. Oy, oi, have uniformly the compound sound of *o* and *i*, except where a departure from rule is indicated: thus, *Joy*, *Spoil*, &c.

13. Oo has uniformly the same sound as in *Food*, *Soon*, *Fool*, &c., except where a difference is particularly intimated.

14. Before *l*, *u* has uniformly the sound of *oo* shortened, except when a difference is particularly indicated: as, *Bull*, *Full*, *Handful*: the sole difference between *full* and *fool* is, that the diphthong in the last is longer than in the first.

15. Ow, ou, uniformly sound as in *Our*, *Now*, except when *w* or *u* is marked as silent, in which case the pronunciation is the same as long *o*: thus, *Flow*, *Source*, *Mould*, pronounced, *mōld*, *sōrce*, *flō*. When *ow*

terminates a word of more than one syllable, it is uniformly pronounced like long *o*: as in Hollow, Sorrow, &c., pronounced *hol' lō, sor' rō*.

16. In monosyllables *y* and *ie* are always pronounced like long *i*; but in words of more than one syllable they are pronounced like short *e*: as, Try, Tries, pronounced *trī, tries*, &c.; carry, carries, pronounced *carry, carries*, &c.

17. Before *nd*, *i* has uniformly the long sound; as in Mind, Kind, &c.: but every other vowel before *nd* is uniformly short; as in Hand, End, Fond, Fund.

18. Before *lk*, *a* sounds *aw*, and *l* is silent; as in Balk, Talk, pronounced *bawk, tawk*.

19. Before *lm*, *a* has the broad German sound, and *l* is silent; as in Calm, Balm, &c.

20. Before *ll* and *ld*, *o* is always long: as, Poll, Old, Fold, Cold, &c., pronounced *pole, ōld, fōld, &c.*

21. Before single *r*, *a* has uniformly what is termed the broad German sound, except in unaccented syllables, where it has the common short sound: as, Far, Part, Partial; Ram'pärt, &c.; and before double *r*, *a* has uniformly the short sound; as in Carry, Tarry, &c.

22. Before *a, o, u*, *C* is always pronounced like *K*; but before *e, i, y*, it is pronounced like *S*: as, Card, Cord, Curd, pronounced *kard, kord, kurd*; Cement, City, Cynic, pronounced *sement, sitty, cin-nic*. When *c* ends a word or syllable, it always sounds the same as *k*; as, music, flaccid, siccify, pronounced

*musik, flak'sed, sik'sity*: k after c is now very properly discarded, except in such words as Back, Pack: as, Music, Physic, &c., not Musick, Physick. It would be well to discontinue the k in every case, (i. e. in connexion with c,) or to substitute it for c; which last letter is wholly superfluous in the English alphabet; and if k and s were made to supersede this double sounding character, much inconvenience would be obviated.

Ch has three sounds, viz. *tsh*, as in Chair, Child, Chin, &c.; *sh*, as in Chaise, Chagrin, Machine, &c.; *k*, as in Chaos, Character, Chorus, Anchor, Mechanic, Epoch, &c.

When the pronunciation is not particularly indicated in the Dictionary, ch is to be understood as having the first sound, i. e. *tsh*; but after l and n, ch always sounds *sh*, as in Bench, Filch, &c.—pronounced *bensh*, *filsh*.

When ci, ti, si, come before a, e, o, they are to be considered as sounding like *sh*, except when a different pronunciation is indicated in the Dictionary; as, Special, Occasion, Diction, Petition, Captious, &c.—pronounced *speshal*, *okazhun*, *petishun*, *capshus*: *tious*, *cious*, are always pronounced *shus*; *cion*, *sion*, *tion*—*shun*; but short, as if put *shn*.

23. G, like C, has two sounds: before a, o, u, l, r, or when terminating a syllable, it is hard; as in Game, Go, Gun, Fig, Fag, &c.: before e, i, y, G is pronounced like J; as in Gem, Genus, Gin, Gibe or Gybe, Gymnastic, Age, Eulogy, &c.: the excep-

tions, such as Get, Geld, &c., are indicated in the Dictionary. Such words as the following are not exceptions, because the *g* is properly the last letter of a syllable, and therefore has the hard sound, viz. Shaggy, Shagged, Ragged, Rugged, Dagger, Anger, Finger, &c. The intention in doubling the *g* in Shaggy, Beggar, &c., was to indicate the hard sound.

When *gn* begins or terminates a word, *g* is silent; as Gnaw, Gnat, Condign, Malign, Feign, Deign, Sign—pronounced *naw*, *nat*, *condine*, *maline*, *fain*, *dain*, *sine*. The vowel preceding the silent *g* or *gh* is uniformly long; as Impugn, Right, Blight, &c.—pronounced *impune*, *rite*, *blite*.

Except in Ghost, Ghast, and their derivatives, (pronounced *gost*, *gast*,) *gh* is to be considered as uniformly silent: the few instances in which it is pronounced *f*, as in Cough, &c.—and *k*, as in Lough—and *g* hard, as in Burgh,—are indicated in the Dictionary.

24. When *kn* begins a word, *k* is silent; as, Knab, Knack, Knee, Know, &c.—pronounced *nab*, *nak*, *nee*, *no*.

25. When *h* is silent, it is marked in the Italic character. It is always sounded at the beginning of words, except in Heir, Heiress, Honest, Honesty, Honour, Honourable, Herb, Herbage, Hospital, Hostler, Hour, Humble, Humour, Humorous, Humoursome. It is always silent after *r*; as in Rhetoric, Rhubarb, Myrrh. When the final letter,

and preceded by a vowel, it is always silent; as in Ah! Oh! Sirrah! When *wh* begins words, it is pronounced *hoo*; as in Whale, Wheel—pronounced *hooale*, *hooeel*, in one syllable.

In the Saxon vocabulary, such words are more properly spelled *Hu* or *Hw*. The modern spelling is a departure from a more reasonable usage than that which is now established. Spelling and pronunciation should, if possible, coincide.

26. The affix *or*, *our*, is uniformly pronounced *ur*; as in Candor or Candour, Favor or Favour—pronounced *candur*, *favur*. The shut or short vowel sounds in unaccented syllables cannot be distinguished as having any difference; and therefore it seems unnecessary to mark *er* as if it were pronounced *ur* in such words as Lover, Mother, Father, &c.

27. The affix *some* is uniformly pronounced *sum*; as in Handsome, Delightsome—pronounced *han'd-sum*, *deli'ghtsum*. This affix is spelled in Saxon, *som*, *sam*, *sum*; and it would be well to return to *sum*, or at least to discard the final *e*; for, as we have so frequently intimated, spelling and pronunciation should coincide.

28. The affix *ous* is uniformly pronounced *us*; as in Covetous, Righteous—pronounced *cuv'etus*, *ri'ght-tjus*: *ous* (like *our* for *or*) is the French mode of expressing the Latin affix *os*.

29. When *w* begins a word, it has the sound of *oo*; as in Ware, Wet, Wile, &c.—pronounced *ooare*, *oost*, *ooile*, in one syllable: *u* before *e*, *i*, *o*, has the

same sound, except when a difference is indicated in the Dictionary; as, Languish, Banquet, Languor, Language; pronounced *lan'gwish*, or *langooish*, *ban'kwet*, *langwur*, *langwage*.

30. S has two sounds, the one sharp and hissing, as in *us*, *this*; the other precisely like z; as in *His*, *Was*, *As*, &c. When the contrary is not indicated in the Dictionary, *s* is to be considered as having the sharp hissing sound of *ss*, as in *Fuss*, *Kiss*: double *s* has uniformly the sharp hissing sound.

31. *Th* has two sounds; the one as in *Thin*, &c.; the other as in *Thine*. When not particularly indicated, *th* is always to be considered as having the first sound; but when followed by final *e* in the same syllable, *th* has uniformly the second sound; as in *Breathe*, *Writhe*, &c. When *Th* is pronounced as *t*, the *h* is marked as silent; thus, *Thyme*, *Asthma*, pronounced *time*, *ast'ma*.

32. *F* and *Ph* have the same sound: *f* has sometimes the sound of *v*; but when this is not indicated, it is always to be considered as having its own proper sound: double *f* has uniformly the sound of *f*, or *ph*; as in *Off*, *Staff*, &c.

33. Before *on* and *ous*, *i* generally sounds like *y*, at the beginning of a word or syllable; as in *Minion*, *Million*, *Tedious*, &c., pronounced *mimyun*, *milyun*, *tedeyus*.

34. When final *e* comes after *l* and *r*, it is to be pronounced as if put before them; as in *Fickle*, *Mingle*, *Theatre*, *Nitre*, pronounced *fikkel*, *mingul*, *theater*,



*niter*. This pronunciation is quite familiar to the French (from whom the mode of spelling and pronouncing such words was adopted), and other foreigners must remember that final *e* is never pronounced as a distinct syllable in the English language.

35. T is always silent between *s* and *en* or *le* ; as in Hasten, Listen, Castle, &c., pron. *haysen*, *lissen*, *kassel*.

36. X has two sounds, viz. *ks* and *gs* : except when particularly marked, it is to be understood as having the first sound.

37. Qu has always the sound of *koo*.

38. The verbal affix *ed*, is seldom pronounced as a distinct syllable except after *d* : as, Feared, Confessed, pron. *fear'd*, *confess'd* ; but in such words as *branded*, *commanded*, &c. it is a distinct syllable.

The above (and they are sufficiently numerous) are all the particulars concerning pronunciation which seem to deserve notice as preparatory to the Dictionary. They have been numbered for the sake of reference, and to render them more distinct for the benefit of learners.

The irregular character of English pronunciation (like that of English spelling) is too manifest to require any comment : whether it be more or less anomalous than that of other languages is a question of no importance ; but there is evidently much importance, i. e. utility, in rendering it as simple and regular as possible. Influential speakers (who have always least reason to dread petty criticism) should

set the example of bringing English pronunciation to English spelling. The latter might (as already intimated) be materially reformed without much trouble: and the great desideratum is coincidence between the one and the other. It is in general, however, safer to make the pronunciation conform to the spelling, than to make the spelling conform to the pronunciation: and to make the one correspond to the other ought evidently to be a rule with every sensible speaker and writer.

In all those words which are differently pronounced by respectable speakers, that mode is worthy of preference which is most agreeable to analogy and most conformable to orthography; as, *Yea*, pron. *ye* and *yay*; *Wound*, pron. like *found* and *woond*; *Break*, pron. *breek* and *brake*; *Oblige*, pron. *oblige* and *obleege*; *Knowledge*, pron. *nöledge* and *nölledge*, &c. &c. The first of these modes of pronunciation is evidently that which should be universally adopted.

Influential speakers should endeavour to bring the general practice to analogy in all cases. It is unworthy of persons who have any respect for utility, to follow the blind guidance of mere custom, or to comply with the anomalous caprices of fashion. The only chance for simplicity, uniformity, and immutable stability to a living language, is to follow the guidance of reason.

When learned or foreign words are adopted, they should be made to conform to the English idiom or

manner of spelling and pronouncing. This plain sensible rule is surely better than pedantry or affectation : and in this we might profit by the example of the French, in imitating whose language we have given such a motley character to our own.

---

#### DIRECTIONS TO THE NATIVES OF SCOTLAND IN PRONOUNCING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

OF course the proper direction to persons who wish to acquire the pronunciation of any language, is to put themselves under the instruction of competent teachers ; for sounds cannot be communicated by written rules or descriptions. All we intend, therefore, is to give such assistance as writing can supply.

Mr. Walker, who treats of every subject connected with English pronunciation in a philosophic manner, remarks—" That pronunciation which distinguishes the inhabitants of Scotland, may be divided into the quantity, quality, and accentuation of the vowels." The author is less happy in these distinctions than usual, owing, perhaps, to his imperfect acquaintance with the Scottish dialect. Had he said *inflection*, *quality* of the vowel sounds, and *accentuation*, he would have presented his meaning more distinctly. He has treated of inflection in a very satisfactory manner ; showing that one of the Scottish peculiari-

ties is the predominant rising slide or turn of the voice as if putting a question ; and proposes, very rationally, that the Scotch should practise as much as possible on the falling, and the Irish (whose peculiarity is directly opposite) on the rising inflection, to acquire that equal mixture or mean proportion of both, which distinguishes the English speaker.

But, as he justly remarks, there is a tone of voice in the Scottish peculiarity besides mere inflection : and it is this, more than any thing else, which has been commonly but indistinctly termed the Scotch accent. Every language has a tone, tune, or recitative, peculiar to itself (which tone is vulgarly called *brogue* when grafted on another language) : it is the same with dialects. The English has comparatively little of recitative ; or it is, at least, quick time and short measure ; it is pronounced “ trippingly on the tongue :” the Scottish dialect has comparatively much of recitative—or it is at least slow and winding, like much of the Scottish music : hence what is commonly termed among the English the Scotch drawl. The idiomatic inflection and drawl, or the national peculiarities of recitative, are the most obstinate difficulties that the natives of Scotland have to contend with in learning English pronunciation. Many of them never surmount these *nationalities* any more than those of a different sort ; and they are so influential that it is impossible to be wholly free from them within the limits of their native country, or in constant contact with those natives of

Scotland in whom they predominate. Even the English are perceived to be Scotchified in their speech after a short residence in the North. The author after a short visit of two weeks in his native country was thought to have the Scotch *twang*, by persons whom previously he had some difficulty in persuading that he was not an Englishman.

The above peculiarities seem, however, in the judgment of the author on the decrease, and will, perhaps, in time disappear. The only direction that can be given to persons wishing to master them, is to learn the English language, if possible, among and from English people. Persons who have always lived in Scotland cannot communicate what they do not possess. They speak English with the Scottish idiom of sound or recitative commonly called accent.

Concerning accent in the proper English acceptance, i. e. stress on a particular syllable, there is very little difficulty. Any individual wishing to acquire the English manner has only to mark those words in which the accent is different from his native dialect, and commit them to memory or practise on them until they are rendered familiar and easy. Where there is a difference it consists uniformly (we do not remember a single exception) in the Scottish being more to the right or towards the end of the word than the English accent—particularly when a verb. Thus, Com'fort, Comfor't, Sen'tence, Senten'ce, Res'cue, Rescu'e, &c. When the vowel in the last syllable of a verb is long, it is almost uniformly accented

in the Scottish dialect ; as, criticise, catechise, &c., pronounced *kreeteseexe*, *katekeexe*, or, in imitation of the English manner, *kreetesixe*.

But the grand difference between the two dialects, is in the quality or sound of the vowels ; many that are long in the one are short in the other, and *vice versa* : *coach box* for example, is usually pronounced in Scotland *cōch bōx* ; *post office*, *pōst ōffice* ; which is an inversion of the English mode as to the length and shortness of the vowels. The proper remedy in this, as in accent, is to mark in a pronouncing Dictionary all the words which differ, and commit them to memory, or practise on them till they become familiar.

It is not so much, however, in an inverted use of the long and short vowels as in the quality of the vowel sounds, that the one dialect differs from the other. In this the diversity is more striking and complete than easily explained or accounted for. It may in a general way be affirmed, that all the long sounds of the vowels are longer, and that all the short sounds of the vowels are shorter as pronounced by English than as pronounced by Scottish speakers. It is impossible to give a distinct idea or true notion of the quality of vowel sounds by written description ; but the *learner* should, as the first step, acquire from vocal exemplification a correct pronunciation of all the English vowels and diphthongs. It is from not having properly attended to this, that many public speakers in Scotland have a mongrel, strange, dis-

cordant pronunciation, possessing neither the ease of a natural manner, nor the euphony of either the English or the Scottish dialect.

It is worthy of notice, perhaps, that the natives of Scotland, like the Irish, Welsh, Germans and others, naturally use the throat, or *gutturalize* more than the English, and pronounce h and r with greater force. These differences account in a great measure for the superior sweetness and ease of the genuine English pronunciation.

*END OF THE INTRODUCTION.*







